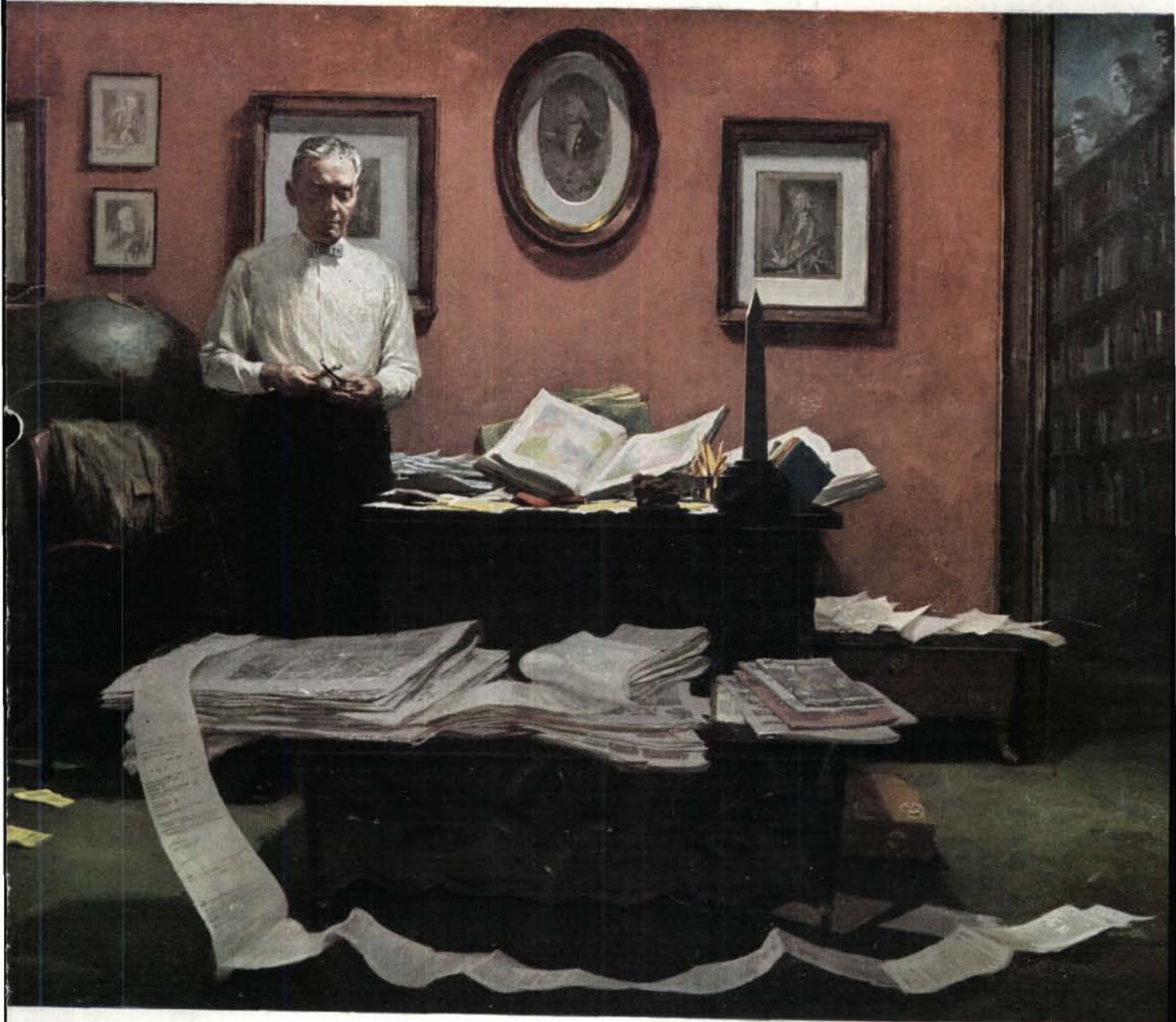


February 1955, 50 cents

THE *Atlantic*



WALTER LIPPMANN

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The Decline of Western Democracy

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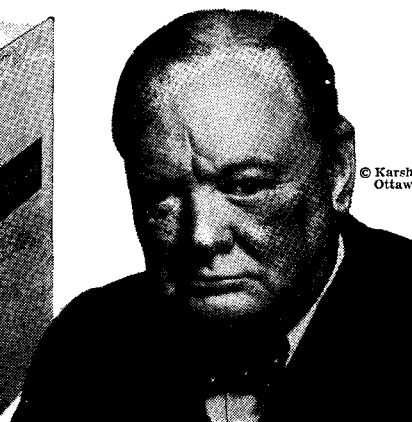
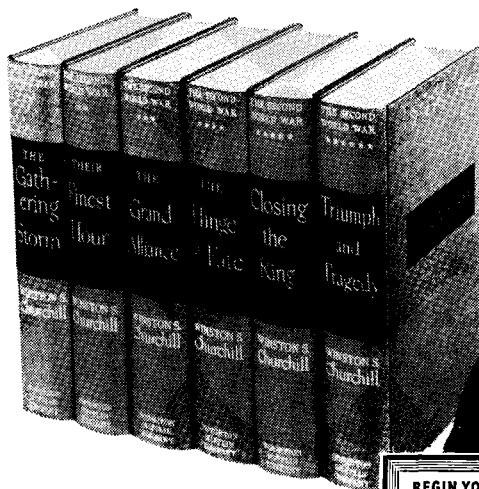
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THE ATLANTIC REPORT

on the World today



Indonesia



THE last year and a half has been Indonesia's most depressing period since *merdeka* — independence. Many Indonesians are worried. The degree of their anxiety or discouragement depends on whether they see the political and economic deterioration as a steady, continuing trend or as the dark hours before the dawn.

Confusion abroad about this complicated country is probably increased by the tendencies of many of its foreign friends and visitors to take polarized positions. Some overconcentrate on such alarming developments as Communist gains and galloping corruption in government. Others are so charmed by and sympathetic with one of Southeast Asia's most delightful peoples that they gloss over all the country's more distressing symptoms.

Some of the difficulties of Southeast Asia's southernmost, biggest, and richest country stem just from geography. Its 80 million people are spread, not over one homogeneous land mass like Burma, but across several thousand big and little islands, loosely linked by dismally inadequate transportation. With four times the population of Vietnam, Indonesia has far fewer experienced officials and technicians. (An engineer just out of school manages the state-owned railways — a post an American would hold in his own country after some twenty-five years of practical experience.)

Colonial legacies

Only half a decade sovereign after more than three centuries of Dutch rule, Indonesia has inherited from the colonial period one of the highest illiteracy rates of the whole Southeast Asian area, cumbersome Dutch administrative methods and machinery, a great bundle of anti-white neuroses,

and an appalling ignorance of the rest of the world. One hangover from the *merdeka* intoxication is a seven-hour day, which amounts to about four hours actual work. Legacies from the four-year war against the Dutch are three or four leftover rebellions against central authority and an army at least twice too big for the country's finances. Even Indonesia's natural wealth is a problem, since plantations, oil fields, and import-export trade remain largely in Dutch hands. Of course the omnipresent, fabulously industrious overseas Chinese control the retail business.

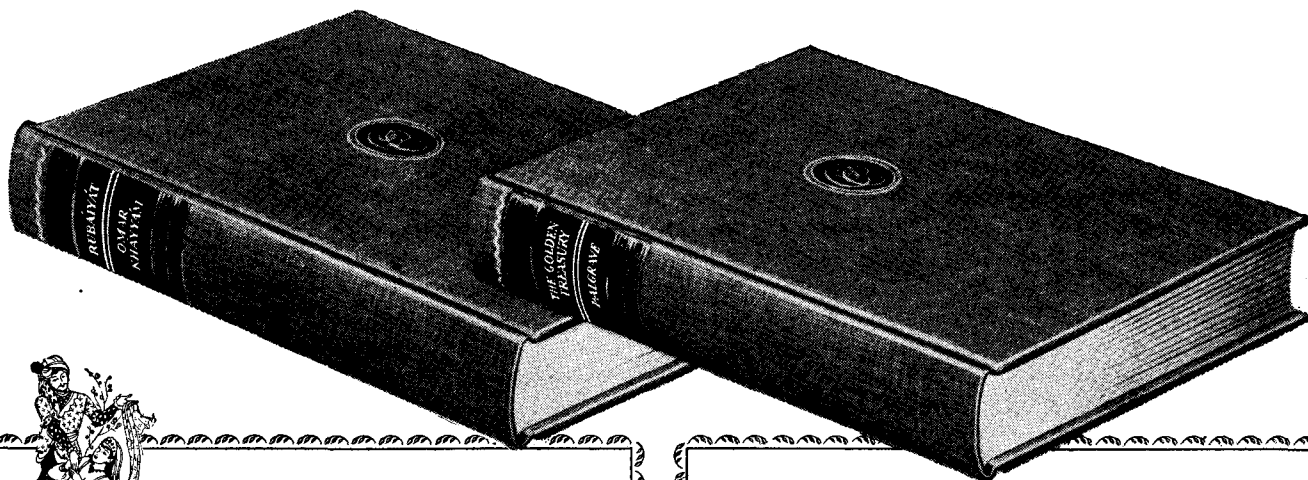
Indonesian progress would be painfully gradual even if directed by its most brilliant leaders. Instead, for more than a year the country's affairs have been in the hands of less than first-rate ministers, headed by the former ambassador to the United States, Ali Sastroamidjojo. The central position in the coalition cabinet has been held by the Indonesian National Party, or PNI, the nation's second largest party, ultranationalists shading from right to a non-Communist left which is, to say the least, muddleheaded about Communism. Coöperating are a score of tiny groups and splinter parties representing minute constituencies and ranging from extreme right-wing orthodox Moslem to a Communist-front peasant outfit. One of these "parties" with a cabinet minister has had one member of parliament.

This heterogeneous alliance has been held together by desire for position and power, by the increasingly open support of President Sukarno, who is supposed to be above and outside partisan politics, and by a jingo nationalism which involves great expenditure of time, oratory, and energy on issues such as Indonesia's claims to Dutch New

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The Atlantic Report on Indonesia



Guinea. Opposition parties are the Masjumi, Indonesia's biggest party, which stands for a Moslem state; the Socialist Party, with small membership but many first-class men; and the Christian parties.

The respectable Communists

Indonesia is the only Southeast Asian country (outside Vietnam) where the Communist Party openly supports the government. The government coalition has insisted it is simply using the Communists. Certainly the Communists have been using their special relationship to the government.

"The Communists have been under a cloud since their revolt against the republican government during the revolution," says a Socialist. "What the Ali government has done is to make them once more respectable." Under previous cabinets the Communist Party (PKI), though legal, was closely watched and had to step rather circumspectly. Now it has more scope. Aidit, the party's 31-year-old secretary general, puts it this way: "We see a government guaranteeing democratic freedoms to an extent never before reached. . . . The prevalence of democratic freedoms enables the fast development of the democratic mass organizations."

Just how fast is illustrated by a few figures. In 1951 the PKI claimed about 12,000 members; today Aidit says there are 500,000 members and candidates. Perbebsi, the Communist-controlled paramilitary organization of ex-guerrillas, has grown in the last year or so from 50,000 to 200,000. Although the Socialists have begun to challenge their control of Indonesian labor, the PKI has been working hard on youth, the army, and the peasants. There are far more hammer and sickle signs and posters in Jakarta and the villages along the roads than a year and a half ago.

The party seems flush with money which Indonesians believe comes from abroad. During 1954 the PKI built a fine new headquarters near the Peiping Consulate, for which they paid, they say, by the sale of postcards. Indonesian delegations are always taking off for some East European conference or other. Last spring a well-known Dutch Communist, generally believed to have the job of instructing the PKI on election tactics, got not only a visa for Indonesia but several months' extension of his visa.

The PKI attacks the government in the villages. But in the capital they are wooing President Sukarno; they have even voiced allegiance to the Pantja Sila, the five principles on which the republic is based, one of them being Belief in God.

It was during the Ali premiership that Peiping filled the Jakarta ambassadorial post left vacant for almost two years. Moscow also set up diplomatic representation, from which the United States Information Agency might take a few tips; all the Russians speak fluent Indonesian and when they give a big reception they send packets of food to the waiting chauffeurs. Aidit says it is in the field of foreign relations that the Ali cabinet has made most progress; in fact PNI "neutralism" does seem slanted in China's and Russia's favor.

Sukarno and the ministers he has backed believe they can ride the Communist tiger. It's true that even the opposition parties do not see Communism as a serious threat to Indonesia — at present. The PKI has infiltrated some, but not many, men into both army and government. The police is anti-PKI.

Some Indonesians think the government's policy towards the Communists has been a good thing, because it has unified the Masjumi, clarified and solidified the anti-Communist views of the Masjumi and Socialists, and galvanized them both into really getting out and working among young people, workers, and peasants.

Corruption in the government

Indonesians have openly called the Ali cabinet the Sukarno cabinet, following Sukarno strategy, weighted with Sukarno's co-workers of the late twenties and the Japanese period. The President's identification of himself with the PNI and his willingness to use the PKI stem from a complex of motives, among which are his desire for power as well as position and his sincere opposition to the Masjumi's concept of an Islamic state. But by casting his lot with one party, by supporting a government which commands very little respect, and by taking as another wife a divorcee of questionable respectability, Indonesia's handsome, magnetic President has lost some of the nation-wide prestige and grass-roots popularity which have always meant so much to him.

One of the most serious developments of 1954 was the emergence, for the first time in Indonesia, of widespread, large-scale corruption among officials. Most of the Ali cabinet seem to have indulged in one or more varieties of financial skulduggery; in at least one key ministry, bribery has reached from the top right down to the lowest clerical level. Since imports and exports are government-controlled, one of the most lucrative rackets has been the selling of "special licenses" to importers (who,

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if they are Indonesian, often resell them to Chinese); the kickback goes to the minister and party coffers, and prices rise.

Officials have used their special position to set up and engage in business. There are other methods of getting rich quick: blackmailing Chinese, for one, and making a big private rake-off on government purchases, for another. Minor graft is exemplified by a government establishment that buys, with precious foreign exchange, several hundred cars every year; after twelve months it sells them for a nominal sum to officials who dispose of them on the black market at an astronomical profit.

Government salaries are incredibly inadequate, and the growth of some corruption was inevitable under any cabinet, but not, say Indonesians bitterly, to the degree that ministers can buy cars, weekend houses, real estate, hotels, and jewelry for their wives.

Friction among the islands

While private pockets have been filled and Dutch and Chinese enterprises have continued to make sizable

profits, there has been serious deterioration in Indonesia's budgetary and foreign exchange position. Prices are high and many near-essentials unavailable in the cities. But it takes a long time for Jakarta's policies to be felt in Indonesia's thousands of little villages based on a fairly primitive agrarian economy.

Increased rice production has meant that the price of this essential food has remained pretty steady. No one is starving in these lush islands. Certainly the villager doesn't like to see roads deteriorating or to pay more for sugar, farm implements, and textiles. But perhaps he balances against these ills the government's remarkable attack on illiteracy among children and adults and the steady growth of coöperatives, sponsored chiefly by the Socialists and Mohammed Hatta, the Vice-President.

A dangerous by-product of Jakarta's wasteful financial policies is the dissatisfaction of other islands over what they regard as Java's monopoly of spending the country's income. Sumatra, Indonesia's biggest island, which earns over half the na-

tion's foreign exchange, complains bitterly that none of its hard-won profits ever comes back for Sumatran development. Its northern tip, the Atjeh district, simply disregards the capital, exporting and importing directly with Malaya.

A dramatic example of how economic ties with Jakarta may be loosening was given last fall by the Celebes, Indonesia's third largest island and the rice producer for east Indonesian territory. In September the Indonesian navy stopped several Burmese ships carrying thousands of tons of copra from Macassar destined for direct export abroad, by-passing legal channels of selling to the central government.

The smugglers carried papers signed by Lieutenant Colonel J. F. Warouw, army commander in the Celebes, who openly defended himself by saying that in spite of the fact that he was supposed to be fighting the island's local rebels he had received no funds from Jakarta for his army. Selling copra, he pointed out, was his only way to get such essential items as cement, soldiers' shoes, and uniforms. The Burmese ships proceeded quietly on their way and Colonel Warouw has since received his normal promotion. This type of economic autonomy can easily develop by degrees into serious political fragmentation. Like corruption, it will be hard to counteract once it gains momentum.

The national election scheduled for 1955 would certainly not solve these or any other Indonesian problems, but it would clear the air for tackling some of them. The present parliament, appointed during the revolution, is responsible to no constituencies and probably reflects actual party strength inaccurately. The election would give one faction, such as the Masjumi, or a coalition of parties a mandate for decisive action.

Everyone, including the Communists, advocates elections; party campaigning and the government's preparations for them continue. But a good many Indonesians in the opposition doubt whether the voting will be held until and unless the government groups believe they can win, one way or another. There is always the danger that if ordinary democratic channels are blocked, Indonesians may turn to other, more costly solutions.

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SINCE the war years, the relationship between the United States and the Latin republics of the Western Hemisphere has been troubled, not to say chronically irritated, by a practical question: How much development aid can the Latin countries get from the "colossus of the North," and on what terms? "Aid," as the Latins see it, means loans, investments, grants of money and credit, commodities and machines, special trade, tariff, and price-support concessions, and technical and cultural services which could in any way further in Latin America a civilization equivalent to ours.

Rightly or wrongly, the bulk of Latin-American political and economic leaders have persuaded themselves that a flow of Yankee dollars in sufficient billions would produce industrialization, improve farm systems, and promote the development of power, transport, natural resources, and public-education facilities comparable to those of the United States.

Furthermore, the spokesmen and negotiators for republics, citing pronouncements of our Good Neighbor Policy makers, maintain that the United States has promised them all this. Hence, when aid has not been forthcoming in sufficient volume to achieve these miracles smoothly, or has been extended only under hard-boiled credit restrictions, the *Latinos* have described themselves as the "orphans of the cold war." On several occasions they have behaved a good deal like people who consider themselves bilked by rich fair-weather friends.

Naturally, in such circumstances, the vastly greater aid programs accomplished in Europe and projected in Asia during the first post-war decade have not eased the misunderstanding. On the contrary, the discrepancy has cut deeper into the Hemisphere relationship because the central problem of how much aid and on what terms has never been faced by either side with frankness.

Diffuse intentions to do something in this direction at the general Inter-American Conference of Bogotá in 1948 were frustrated by the Bogotá riots. A more specific effort to come to grips with the question was planned at a follow-up economic con-

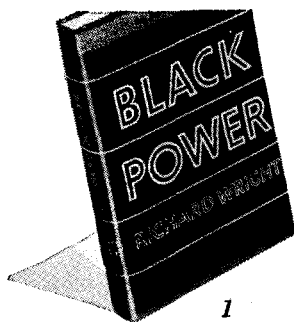
ference scheduled to be held at Buenos Aires on various dates in 1948 and after. But because of a prolonged Argentine depression and the "little cold war" between Washington and the Perón regime, the Buenos Aires meeting was postponed to death.

At both the 1951 consultation of American Foreign Ministers in Washington, and the March, 1954, general Inter-American Conference at Caracas, the United States was so occupied with the Communist problem in the Hemisphere and elsewhere that the showdown on economic matters was neglected except for a few generalized resolutions in favor of collaboration.

What Latin America will get from us

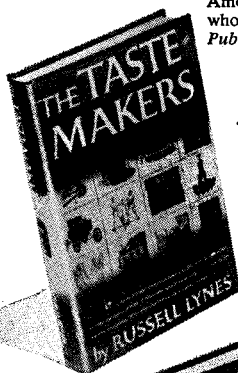
The conference of American Finance and Economy Ministers last November at Petropolis was more realistic. It made possible a relatively clear official exposition of what the Latin Americans want from the United States. They would like larger loans for development, from both public funds and private investment. They would like legal and financial support in stabilizing prices on their exports of raw materials and on imports, especially machinery, essential to development. They would like abatement of income and other taxes which discourage investments, on profits of United States investors in Latin America. They would like the collaboration of the United States in the establishment of an inter-American bank.

The United States delegation, headed by Secretary of the Treasury George Humphrey and Under Secretary of State Herbert Hoover, Jr., as his deputy, made plain its position on these requests. A more generous loan policy was agreed to so far as the Export-Import Bank and the newly proposed International Finance Corporation are concerned. Reduction of United States double taxes on incomes earned through Latin-American investments will be recommended to Congress. The United States will not participate in the founding of an inter-American bank; but if the Latin Americans want to found one on their own, Washington will regard it benevolently and will keep an open mind on possible future collaboration. On price stabilization projects, nothing doing.



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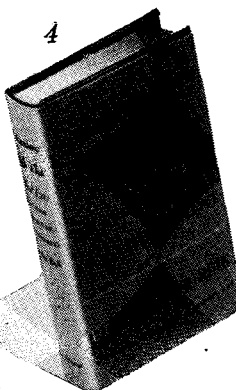


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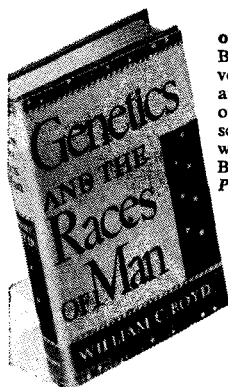
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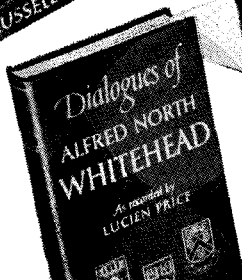
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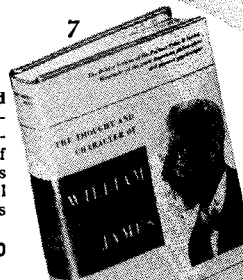
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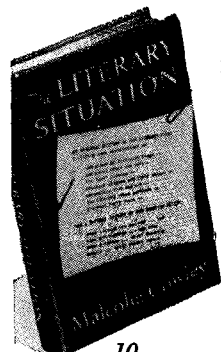
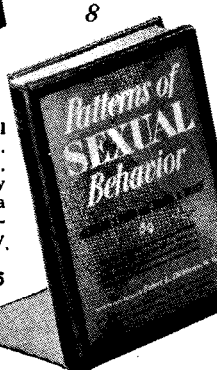
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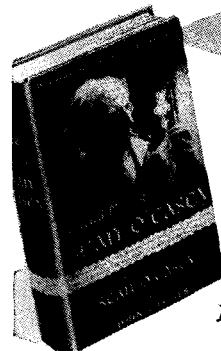
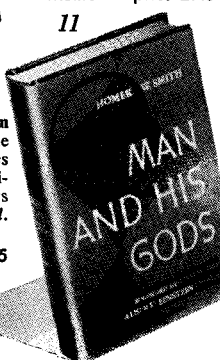


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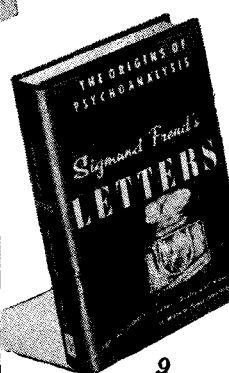
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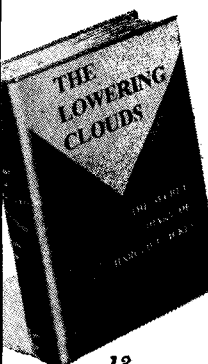


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The meeting provided for biennial Finance Ministers' conferences from now on — the first at Buenos Aires in 1956. The stage is thus set for dealing with the issues of aid and collaboration on a regular basis.

What Latin America needs

The basic obstacles to building a firm economic front for the Hemisphere in the world-wide struggle against Communism still remain. To bring about this front, Latin America requires over a long period a flow of capital and credit which will enable its republics to adjust their economies to some of the most prodigious changes taking place anywhere on this planet. And the flow must be, not necessarily on orthodox terms of United States business investment, but on terms which the Latin Americans can utilize.

Three essential factors are producing the changes: —

1. A vast population growth — a "procreative explosion." The number of Latin Americans has increased from slightly more than 100 million a generation ago to 170 mil-

lion in 1955. In the opinion of most population experts, the number of people will increase to 275 million by 1980, and to half a billion by early in the next century.

2. Urbanization. A rush of new population to the cities has transformed Buenos Aires, São Paulo, and Mexico City into metropolises; it has pushed smaller capitals — Bogotá, Caracas, Santiago, and Montevideo — close to the million mark; and it has proportionately upped the population of scores of rural and agrarian centers from around 5000 to 50,000.

3. Industrialization. New money, made through rising land values — especially city values — in the population and urbanization waves, has flowed into huge factory investments. The result has been industrial employment for millions and the stimulating of a new demand for modern living standards that makes itself felt from jungle huts to swank suburban palaces.

These revolutionary increases and transformations have converted Latin America into a plant much more ex-

pensive to operate profitably than it was toward the close of its relatively pastoral era two decades ago when the Roosevelt Good Neighbor Policy was initiated.

The swelling populations require jobs and immensely enlarged markets, domestic and foreign, for their products. Latin America's spreading cities require sanitation, public health, and public transport facilities scaled to their size. They need highway and rail connections with the hinterland so that abundant food supplies can be made available to their people at reasonable cost. Latin industries require selective adaptation of factories to their markets so that they can produce consumers' goods in the quantities and qualities demanded by their hordes of customers, as well as heavy goods and machinery in countries where demand justifies their manufacture.

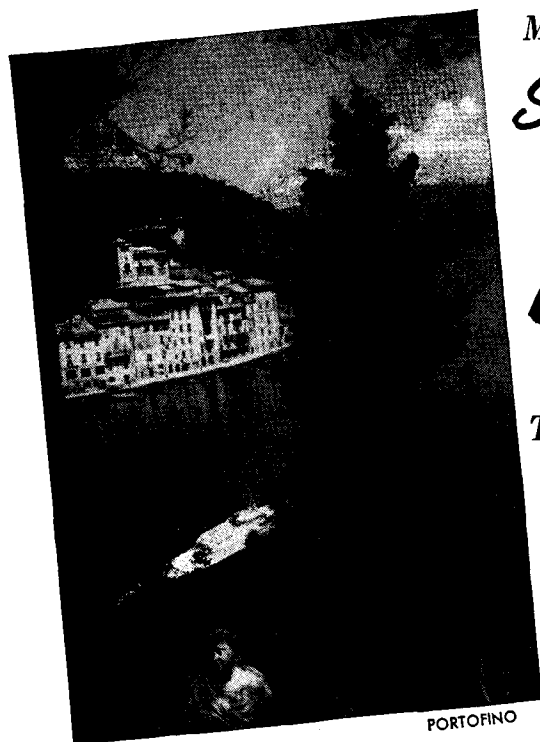
The people, urban or rural, industrial or agrarian, require adequate education to enable them to work effectively on the production lines. Both Latin America's masses and her industrialists require from their governments currency and credit management stable enough to provide a reasonably secure value to wages and profits.

The overall need of Latin America, as the fastest-growing continental region on earth, is for a functioning economy. One of the outstanding investment opportunities of history lies in our being a "good partner" in the task of providing it. An outstandingly dangerous calamity of our times could be provoked if we permitted Latin America's vast population growth to produce a collapse of its economy, inviting Communist solutions and violence.

Too many restrictions

The efforts of the Latin-American governments to finance their own developments have led to a vast manufacture of paper money for investments and pay rolls. Thus a chronic inflation has afflicted all but one or two of the republics; it is cataclysmic in key countries like Brazil and Chile.

Manifestly, a more generous United States loan and aid policy could not do much good if the flow of credits were used merely to stoke further



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inflation and to provide tidbits of graft in the Latin republics. But loans conditioned upon their direct practical use for necessary industries and for the huge public works which Latin America requires for its development, if they were properly administered, would supply employment for new workers at steady wages in an economy of stabilized prices.

There can be no question of the capacity of the United States to scale its aid to the scope of the problem. Realistic enthusiasts for aid programs on both sides of the border consider half a billion dollars a year sufficient for Latin America's current emergencies. And half a billion a year would compare favorably with the \$4 billion extended to Europe in the first year of the Marshall Plan. It emphasizes the relatively sparse flow of Hemisphere aid to point out that, out of the \$80 billion provided by us in foreign assistance since 1940, the Latin republics have received less than 2 per cent.

Secretary Humphrey's proposed International Finance Corporation is designed to solve the problems of a few grade-A applicants ineligible for World and Export-Import Bank credits. But it is doubtful if, with the world-wide scope of its prospective operations and its relatively meager capital of \$100 million, it can provide much more than negligible help to Latin America.

Why U.S. investors are skittish

The Humphrey delegation's recommendations for more favorable treatment of U.S. private investors in Latin America, while hardly received with universal enthusiasm, nevertheless did highlight a major factor in the Hemisphere's aid problem. A large number of Latin governments, particularly below the Caribbean in South America, have consistently refused to recognize during the post-war years that this outstanding method of furthering economic development can operate at full effectiveness only as a two-way street.

At present, flow of private capital into the republics is blocked by a number of things: fear of expropriation; prohibition of foreign exploitation of natural resources, as in the case of Brazilian oil deposits; picky government restrictions on a number of business activities, including labor

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policies in many countries; complicated and often impractical exchange and import regulations; and limitation of the right of profit repatriation.

Such investment-hampering trends are, to be sure, by no means universal. They exist not at all, or only in minor degree, in Mexico and Cuba and the boom republics of Venezuela and Colombia. Bolivia, which expropriated United States tin holdings a few years ago, and American oil properties during the 1930s, has recently granted oil development rights to the Glenn McCarthy interests. The Argentine government currently is relaxing profit repatriation regulations for new capital.

Peru opens her doors

Peru is a notably instructive example of the advantages of a complete breakaway from the anti-foreign investment trend. Since President Odría's regime took over in 1948, Peru has allowed its currency to settle in a free exchange market with the result that the sol is now steady at 19 without the country's having had to draw on a \$30 million stabilization loan extended by the Chase National Bank. All trade and exchange restrictions have been removed except a few minor import regulations. Foreign corporations operate in the republic substantially on the same basis as native business.

In consequence, Peru has been relatively flooded with U.S. prospectors for investment openings. One of its major development projects is reflected in a new Export-Import loan to the southern Peru subsidiary of the American Smelting and Refining Company. The loan, which will be drawn upon when \$105 million of privately raised capital is available, is to be used for the development of new copper mines at Toquepala in the Arequipa region of the Andes, the building of a railroad from Toquepala to Mollendo, and the complete modernization of the Mollendo seaport.

The Celanese Corporation of America and the Container Corporation of America have relatively new plants at Cali in Colombia. International General Electric, in spite of being squeezed by the collapse of the Mexican peso, is operating a big lamp factory at Monterrey and sweating out restrictions with reasonable suc-

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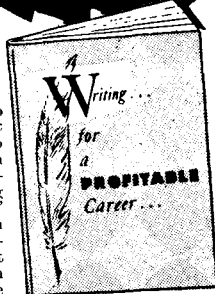
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cess in an electrical appliance factory in Brazil. Westinghouse on the whole has made a success of a program which mainly relies on licensing nationals in the Latin republics to manufacture and distribute the company's products.

The vast new iron ore workings of United States Steel and Bethlehem Steel in Venezuela, which are already shipping 2 million tons of ore to the United States, are indications of the development to be achieved through American capital in the restrictionless republics. So is the continued success of American oil operations in Venezuela.

The Rockefeller brothers' operations, aimed at the exploration of business activities of direct economic and social benefit to Venezuela and Brazil, have now plowed through their experimental stages and come out with large profitable investments in big supermarkets in Maracaibo, Caracas, and Rio de Janeiro, and with a stake in a powdered milk industry in those republics.

Even in the republics where restrictions are onerous, United States corporations with sufficient resources and gifts for adaptation to their difficulties are operating both their own and their Latin-American interests. Sterling Drug Company, like International General Electric and many other corporations, has met the restrictions on profit repatriations mainly by plowing back profits as new capital.

In pleading for an end to restrictions on foreign investments, the Humphrey delegation to Petropolis was merely filing a protest against what it regards as undue frustration of North American capacities to assist Latin America's development.

There was left over, however, the feeling in certain sectors of the State Department and of Congress that for diplomatic and political purposes the protests may have been excessively blunt. The tone perhaps more than the content of the Humphrey advice apparently did strengthen Latin American suspicions that the United States may be taking advantage of the republics' adjustment to growth to infiltrate Yankee business management into their economies even more extensively than before.

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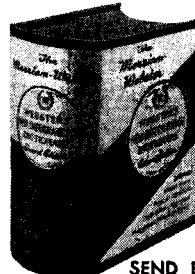
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Australia

THE whole Labor movement in Australia — industrial as well as political — is involved in a struggle for power. A new series of explosions was touched off last October by Dr. Herbert V. Evatt's charge that a small minority group had become increasingly disloyal to the Labor movement and to Labor leadership.

The party is rent by a complexity of interests, but the deep division goes back to 1945 when it became apparent that the Communist Party had entrenched itself in the trade unions and was growing in strength. Many Labor men — including Prime Minister Chifley, who was by no means pro-Communist — looked on Communism as merely another political philosophy. The Roman Catholic Church, however, saw in it a challenge to the entire Labor movement and even to Australia.

With the approval of both the Catholic hierarchy and the Labor Party, industrial groups were formed within the unions to combat Communism. The groups were predominantly Catholic but included some non-Catholics. They received discreet guidance from a lay member of the Catholic Action in Australia, Mr. B. A. Santamaria, a first-generation Australian of Italian-Spanish descent. He is national secretary of the Catholic Rural Movement and has made himself an authority on Communism.

The industrial groups achieved spectacular successes. However, in time, non-Communist non-industrial group union officials found that they, too, were being displaced by group nominees. The important Victorian and New South Wales Labor executives were captured, and through them pressure has been exerted, at times, on the state governments. Fear of arousing sectarian issues has prevented reaction against the industrial groups from coming to the surface earlier, but many of their strongest opponents are sincere Catholics.

Dr. Evatt, not himself a trade unionist — he stepped down from the High Court bench to enter federal politics in 1941 — has never had the complete confidence of any section of the Labor Party, although from time to time he has been able to evoke the support of powerful groups. Since Labor's

defeat at the 1949 election, his hold on the parliamentary leadership of the party has been precarious. But the real issue transcends the survival of Dr. Evatt or any particular faction. Labor, disunited, could forfeit to the Communists hard-won ground in the unions; in the federal Parliament it is de-vitalized even in its role of Opposition. If need be, all Australia should be able to speak with one voice.

Contribution to the West

Australians, never able to forget their isolation from the western powers, have watched with growing concern the spread of Communism in Asia by aggression and subversion. If the provisions of the Southeast Asian Collective Defense Treaty are less than they had hoped for and had been prepared to support, they nevertheless recognize that, apart from any other aspect of the Treaty, economic aid given to Southeast Asian countries will be, in itself, a practical reinforcement against the blandishments of Communist propaganda.

Under the Colombo Plan Australia's commitment for the six-year period ending June, 1957, is \$69.7 million. Up to June, 1954, commodities and equipment worth about \$20.2 million had been sent to Southeast Asia, 66 technical experts had been sent to the area, and nearly 500 Asian students had come to Australia for training. Correspondence courses from Australian schools, which began in January, will enable students in Asia to use Australian educational facilities.

Australia's 9-million population limits her quantitative contribution to western military strength, but she has unshakable faith in the quality of her fighting men. The policy now adopted, of weighting the defense effort in favor of the Air Force, has provoked much thoughtful criticism.

The Australian Army is being reorganized and expenditure on arms, mechanization, and equipment increased. The jungle warfare training school at Canungra, Queensland, well known to Australian and Allied servicemen during World War II, was reopened in January under instructors with recent Malayan experience. It covers about 7000 acres of extremely rugged tropical country.

Australian pilots for the Rolls-Royce Avon-powered Sabre Jets now being produced in Australia are training under Australian, British, and American instructors. The building of jet fighters and bombers in Australia is considered a minimum security measure. Undoubtedly, however, if war should come, Australia would need speedy help and at least partial re-equipment with even more modern types of aircraft.

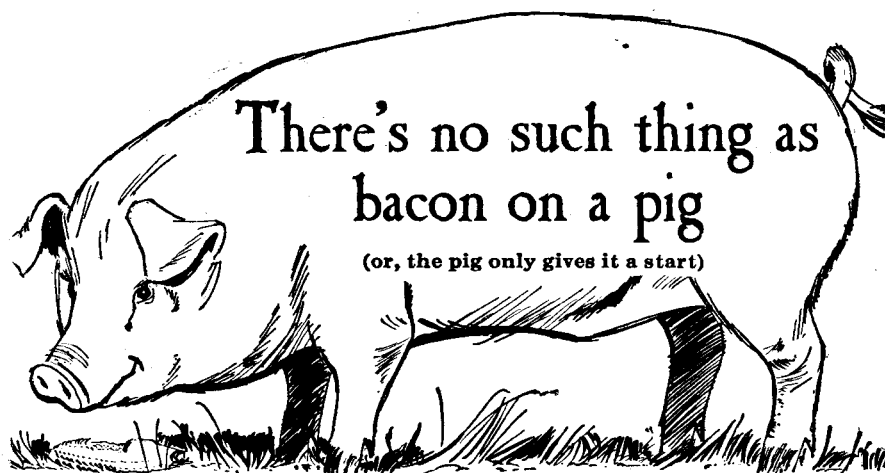
About \$9 million of this year's Air Force vote of \$129 million will be spent on improvement of airfields in northern Australia and nearby islands. Already many wartime airstrips have been recommissioned. Airfields at Darwin, Manus Island, and Port Moresby in New Guinea will be equipped to take any type of aircraft under all-weather conditions. From a chain of such airfields encircling Australia, sea lanes can be guarded for 3000 miles out to sea. Some fighter and bomber squadrons will be stationed in the north, but complete mobility of all squadrons and their ground support is planned.

The defense allocation for the current year is \$476.3 million. In September the Minister for Defense, Sir Philip McBride, hinted that possible extra defense commitments might necessitate some control of financial, material, or manpower resources. The suggestion, interpreted as government kite-flying, was immediately attacked, critics contending that redirection could have been achieved by appropriate financial policies under the federal budget.

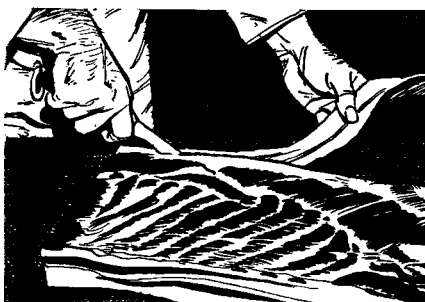
Shortage of workers

A good deal of criticism had already been leveled at the budget, proposed in August, in that it gave little relief to secondary industry, which employs about one million of the total labor force of approximately 2.7 million, at wages substantially higher than are paid by overseas competitors.

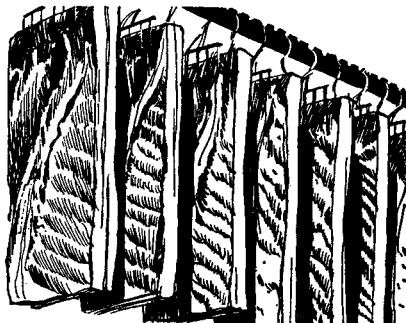
The reduction of costs is an imperative responsibility for governmental authorities, management, and labor. Australia again has full employment; wages and profits are high; production has increased. More than half the national income — \$8483 million in 1953-54 — is derived from a very wide range of secondary industry. A number of large overseas firms with valuable experience and



It's a long, long way from the pig to the crisp bacon on your breakfast plate. What originally comes from the hog isn't what you'd call bacon at all—not at first, anyway. Bacon requires lots of "post graduate" work before it's ready to cook.



1 The first step is to select the "side" that can be made into the kind of bacon you like. Then the "side" is trimmed and squared carefully into the proper shape by a skilled workman.



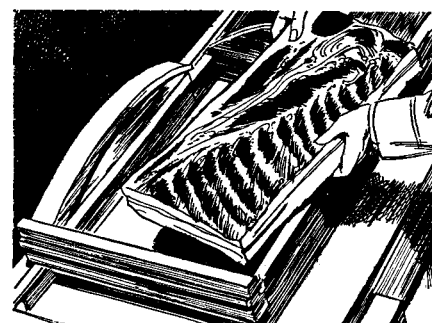
3 Then it's hung on "Bacon Tree" racks and moved into the smokehouse, where smoke from special wood gives it the haunting fragrance that brings your family bounding into the kitchen.



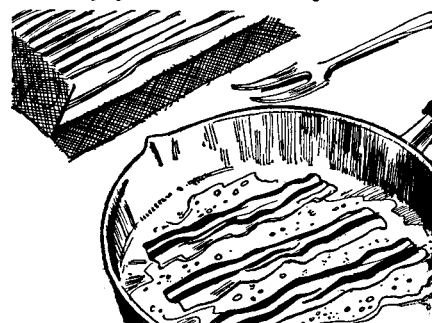
5 Finally, the slicing machine shaves it off in uniform slices (about 10 slices per second). Wrappers pack it neat and pretty; and the shipping department starts it off to you.



2 Next comes the curing. Every one of America's hundreds of bacon-making packers has his own special curing formula. Gives you lots of flavors to choose from.



4 After it comes out of the smokehouse your bacon is chilled. Then it's "formed" into just the right shape so the slices come out nice and even, the way you see them in your store.



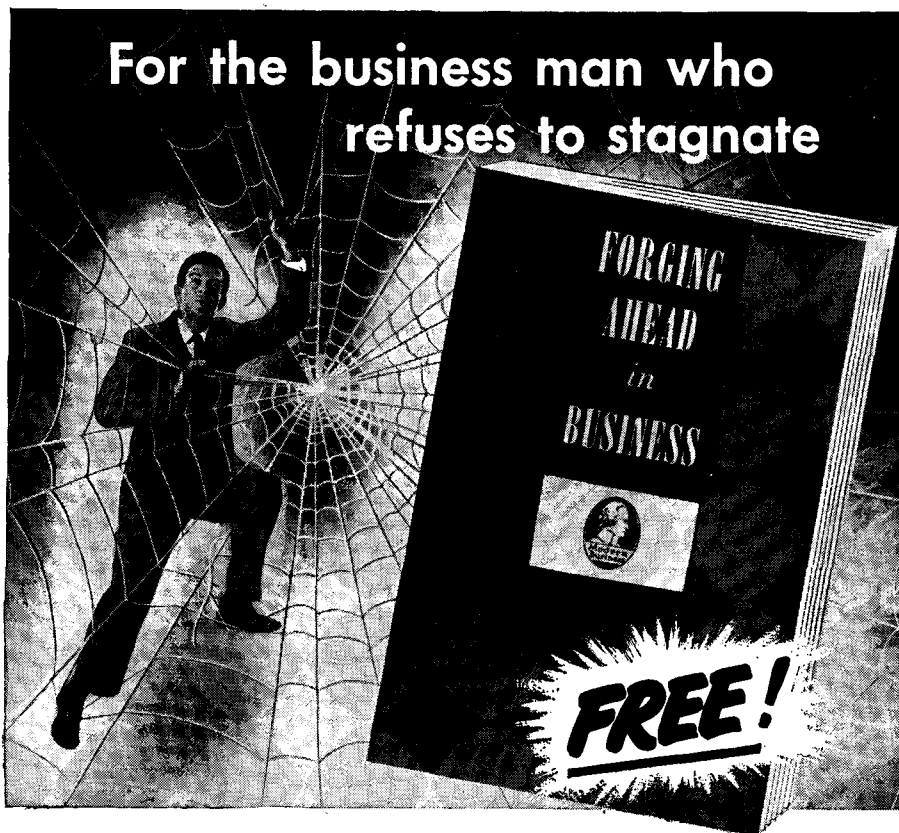
6 Surprise you how many steps there are from porker to packer to breakfast table? Yet bacon is only one of hundreds of processed meats prepared in modern packing "kitchens" every day.

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new knowledge have established affiliations in Australia, quickening expansion in the fields of metals, engineering, oil refining, chemicals, and food processing.

However, pressure on labor and materials has returned. There is a shortage of skilled workers despite the emphasis modern machinery is giving to semi-skilled labor. Some building materials are in short supply, and the output of the steel industry, which increased by 80 per cent in the last five years, is exceeded by demand.

Competition from the increased flow of imports consequent on relaxation of import quotas accelerated applications for tariff protection. In October, some import controls had to be reimposed to remove a threat to overseas balances. Both the government and the Tariff Board, however, are anxious lest protection should encourage non-competitive industry.

Much genuine effort has been made to increase efficiency. More advantage could be taken of technological progress, and further research stimulated, but manufacturers claim that that is closely linked with replacement, modernization, and extension of plant, that costs of replacement have far outstripped original investment, and that industry is being denied concessions granted in competing countries.

The development of soundly based industry which could be converted quickly to defense needs is government policy. Moreover, industry is expected to absorb the greater part of the annual intake of migrants. The building of Australia's population as speedily as possible is, in itself, a defense necessity, and the immigration target for 1954-55 has been raised to 115,000.

Growth and buoyancy

Australia enjoys a high standard of living, and inevitably the increasing population—it has grown by 1.4 million since 1947—makes heavy demands for consumer goods which must be either locally produced or imported. It is claimed that the federal treasurer's large taxation concessions to low-income groups—well-paid teen-agers are among the beneficiaries—tend to stimulate the very type of productivity he hoped to restrict.

If high living standards are to continue and Australia's development is to proceed at an adequate rate, somewhere within management-employee relations must be found ways to link wages more effectively to production than is at present the case. A council representing employers and unions, formed recently to act in a confidential capacity to the federal Ministry of Labor, may help to bring management and labor closer together.

Agricultural production, now 22 per cent higher than in 1939, is only slightly below the five-year target set up in 1952. It has not, however, lessened Australia's dependence on the wool industry to boost her export income. In 1953-54, wool and sheepskins provided \$963.9 million of the total export merchandise income of \$1828.9 million. Wheat, dairy produce and meat, fruit and sugar, together brought \$412.3 million.

Increasing mechanization is helping to solve the labor problem on farms and pastoral properties but has not noticeably reduced costs. The Australian system of specialized farming is particularly suited to mechanization. Between 1939 and 1953 the number of tractors increased from 42,000 to 158,000.

Power development

The ambitious Snowy Mountains hydroelectric project in southeastern Australia, which is turning most of the waters of the alpine-fed Snowy and Eucumbene rivers through Australia's highest mountains into the western-flowing Murrumbidgee and Murray rivers, is taking shape. Its first power supply will be available this year. It provides for a total generating capacity of 320,000 kilowatts and an eventual increased annual water supply of 500,000 acre-feet to the already large Murray-Murrumbidgee irrigation area. Big American, French, and Norwegian construction firms are working under contract on various sections of the project.

Australia is spending about \$224.7 million a year on electrical development, and by 1958 present total generating capacity will be doubled. Meanwhile the first decisive step towards the production of atomic energy in Australia has been taken. As the result of information to be made available by Britain, a large up-to-date nuclear research reactor

Is The Catholic Church Out of Place in America?

Some critics say "yes" and give as their reasons that the Church is not 100 per cent American and not democratic.

They say it is undemocratic, for example, for the Church to oppose birth control and divorce with remarriage. It is undemocratic for Catholics to maintain their own schools...to campaign against obscene literature, books and films...to promulgate a distinctive Catholic culture.

What, we ask, could be *more* undemocratic than to deny Catholics the right to do these very things if they choose?

Christ's Church was not intended, of course, to be American, or British, French or German. It was to be *catholic*, not national—at home everywhere, alien nowhere. Nor was Christ's Church designed to be democratic. It was established on a hierarchical system, with authority vested in the Apostles—not in the Congregation. That is the nature and design of the Catholic Church.

To assert that the Catholic Church is undemocratic implies that it is anti-democratic and antagonistic to America's "democratic" system. Nothing could be further from the truth. No firmer dedication to democratic principles could be made than that voiced by the Catholic Bishops of the United States at their Third Plenary Council, in Baltimore, in 1884. The present Pope, Pius XII, supplementing similar comments by earlier Popes, declared in 1944 that the member of a true democracy is "a citizen of honor, of personal activity and of dignity."

In 1576—just 200 years before the Declaration of Independence—Robert Cardinal Bellarmine, a famed member of the Catholic Hierarchy—wrote that "all men are equal"... "that political



right is from God"... "that man must be governed by someone"... that government "must depend on the consent of the multitude"... and that "for legitimate reasons the people can change the government..."

If America is to have a genuine democracy, it must be recognized as the right of the Catholic Hierarchy to expound Catholic doctrine, to instruct the Catholic people, to legislate and regulate in matters concerning the Catholic Church. To do so infringes in no way on the rights or liberties of non-Catholics.

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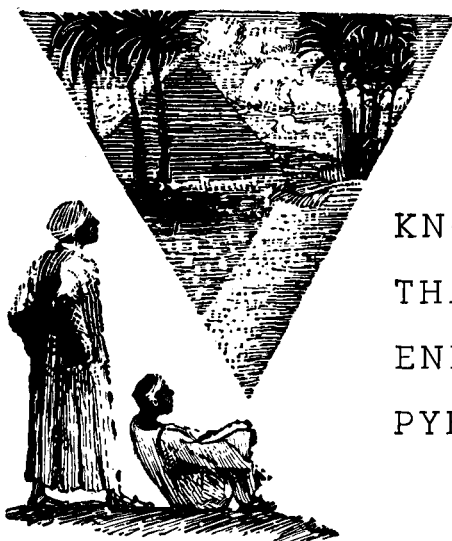
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will be built near Sydney. Australian research will be correlated with current research in Britain and duplication of effort avoided. The Australian government hopes that within ten years it may be economically feasible to supply electric power from nuclear sources to parts of Australia remote from conventional fuel supplies.

In September, at the Rum Jungle uranium field 66 miles south of Darwin in the Northern Territory, the Prime Minister officially opened Australia's first plant for the treatment of uranium ores. An especially created subsidiary of a large Australian mining company, engaged by the federal government to develop and operate Rum Jungle, erected the plant and neighboring township in less than two years. Considerable financial and other help was provided by the Anglo-American Combined Development Agency, which is also buying the uranium oxide. A second uranium treatment plant is under construction in South Australia, and a third plant in northwestern Queensland is being contemplated.

Northern Australia

North of the Tropic of Capricorn lie approximately one million square miles of Australia, with a white population of about 290,000 in Queensland, 16,000 in the Northern Territory, and 6000 in Western Australia. On the development and closer settlement of this vast area may finally rest Australia's survival as a nation of European race, culture, and standards.

North Queensland, with flourishing cattle, sheep, sugar, and mining industries, is already prosperous. Its potential is high. Tremendous difficulties, however, impede the development of the Northern Territory and the north of Western Australia. The only railway runs south from Darwin for 300 miles. Livestock moving into the Queensland fattening areas from the Northern Territory and the Kimberley District of Western Australia trek up to 1500 miles. Exploitation of extensive mineral deposits is also hampered by distance from markets and sources of supplies.

There is potential agricultural land within the northernmost region, to which the summer monsoon brings a rainfall of from 25 to 60 inches. However, intense humidity, high temperatures, and myriad insects make the

four months' wet acutely unpleasant. The short streams flood quickly and pour most of their water straight into the sea. Evaporation is swift, and in years when the monsoon fails the long dry deteriorates into serious drought. In the drought of 1951-52, about 250,000 cattle died. The sinking of bores to tap subartesian water is costly; and until recently, short leases have discouraged landholders from heavy capital investment. Adequate fencing and herd improvement are among the pressing necessities.

The Minister for the Territories, Mr. Paul Hasluck, and Mr. Frank Wise, able Administrator of the Northern Territory, have been prodding the federal government. Stock routes have lately been somewhat improved, and practical encouragement has been given to the pastoral and mining industries. Expenditure on health and education services last year reached \$2.3 million. Agricultural research is proceeding, and an American business group is investigating the possibilities of large-scale cultivation of rice for export to Southeast Asia.

Some highly promising new uranium fields have been discovered in the Northern Territory and near the rich silver-lead mines at Mount Isa, Queensland. Uranium and the possibility of oil — at least in Western Australia — underline the strategic significance of the north. They may bring the long-awaited rail link with Queensland.

New Guinea

Australian administration of the trust territory of New Guinea has received general approval of the United Nations Trusteeship Council. Including adjacent islands, the combined area of Papua and the trust territory is about 180,000 square miles, much of it mountainous and jungle-covered. Native welfare has genuinely been kept in the forefront of policy, and the confidence of the primitive tribes has been won before economic or other development has been attempted. Progress has consequently been slow.

The policy was repaid, however, by the loyalty of the natives during World War II. New Guinea has immense strategic significance for Australia; and with the exception of a Communist-led minority, Australians are flatly opposed to Indonesian claims to Dutch New Guinea.

A Casualty in a war he never knew

ROBERT has paid a price for freedom. Every small boy needs a father to mend his broken toys, to play with him, to see that he has warm clothes and enough to eat. Robert, who is not yet four, has none of these. A war 6,500 miles from France, half-forgotten already, took them away from him and left only loneliness and poverty.

Robert cannot even remember the soldier father who fought and died in Indochina. To Robert, "Daddy" is a storybook hero who left to his only son, not his sword and shield, but the War Cross and the Military Medal. When Robert sits astride his broken hobby horse he pretends that *he* is Daddy, riding out to meet the enemy.

Robert lives with his mother, grandmother, and three sisters in a wooden shack on the outskirts of the seaport of Brest, France. The house is damp and cold. There is no running water, no gas, no inside toilet. Robert plays along the muddy pathways or among the garbage cans.

With luck, Robert *may* find someone to mend his broken horse — his only toy. But his mother cannot buy shoes for him — unless someone helps. There will not be enough food to bring color to his pale cheeks, there will not be warm clothing to keep him protected from the bitterness of a Breton winter.

A broken toy, some scraps of ribbon and bits of metal — precious as they are — are not enough. A hero's son — a very small boy — needs help.

HOW YOU CAN HELP ROBERT

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LETTERS TO AND FROM THE EDITOR

Progressive Education

SIR:

Gladwin Hill's article, "A Father Looks at Progressive Education" (December *Atlantic*), raises this question. If reality for public school education as far into the future as we can presently see means 1) about forty pupils per teacher, without any student assistants for her, 2) half-day sessions in many schools, and 3) parental detachment and apathy which border on the pathological, should not someone dream up a system of education which would be functional in that it would teach youngsters what they need to learn in order to become healthy-minded and well-informed adults? And should not this system be created *within the educational framework which exists and which will continue to exist far into the foreseeable future?*

There is something to be gained by setting up an ivory tower environment for educational purposes. The University Elementary School in Los Angeles has obviously done a good job of justifying the "progressive" education methods. (Teachers are now being advised to use the adjective "modern," which means the same thing but which won't scare people.) But has it proved, merely by accepting as its pupils a racial and economic cross section of the population, that this method is effective when it faces the reality of the educational picture the country over? It has *not*.

Furthermore, I feel that Mr. Hill's contention that the children in the University Elementary School are not hand-picked may not be accurate. True, they are not "hand-picked" on

the basis of racial or economic status. But will Mr. Hill give me a definite "yes" or "no" answer as to whether or not they are picked on the basis of IQ? As anyone who has taught knows, one or two subnormals in any given group seriously affect the effectiveness of the teaching job that can be done, particularly in situations where there are no student assistants to whom the subnormals may be assigned for individual care.

ANNE GOULD FALCON
Los Angeles, Calif.

SIR:

In all the welter of accusations and counteraccusations that have been made about our schools, it is refreshing and encouraging to read Gladwin Hill's sensible and appreciative account of what one modern school is doing for his children.

WALTER E. CLARK, *Director*
North Country School
Lake Placid, N.Y.

SIR:

Mr. Hill's arguments in favor of progressive education, though interesting enough, do not begin to answer objections raised by the colleges.

Freshmen entering college today who have been subjected to intensive progressive education through grammar and high school cannot write their own language. That is meant in two senses. First of all, they are never taught to write script; thus they find they cannot take notes in class, they cannot write examinations, nor can they write extended papers in the privacy of their own rooms. Secondly, they are never taught to organize their thoughts in any cohe-

sive, grammatical, and logical style. In many universities today, there are classes in the writing of English which are of high school level.

Nor does criticism from the colleges end there. Mathematics has become anathema in progressive circles. Mr. Hill has no doubt heard progressive principals of schools suggest that mathematics for all is as absurd as violin playing for all. One very dangerous result of this mathematics-free Utopia is the decline in college students specializing in science and engineering. I refer Mr. Hill to recent articles in his own *New York Times* comparing Russia's production of scientists and engineers with our own. The figures lead to the conclusion of a coming Soviet superiority in science unless something is done soon to restore a status quo ante progressive education in our pre-college schools.

NORMAN HERZ
Brookline, Mass.

SIR:

I must thank you for publishing Mr. Hill's article, which in its fairness is in marked contrast to a number of recent articles presenting prejudices bolstered by selected exceptional activities.

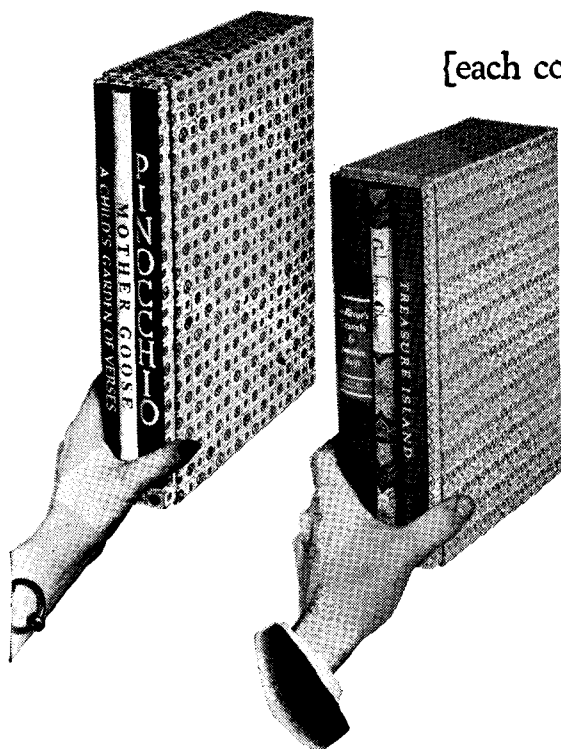
THOMAS H. BRIGGS
New York City

SIR:

Once upon a time I was a teacher, and my first school was in a farming district where I took charge in 1891 at twenty dollars per month.

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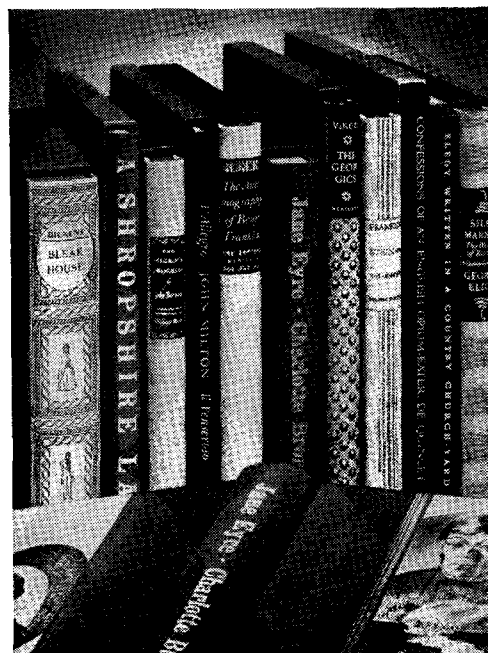
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and in the school, and there was no such thing as juvenile delinquency. Perhaps that was due to the fact that in every household there was family worship at bedtime every night.

As time went on I obtained a position in a graded school in a city, at fifty dollars per month. I did not then know anything about "progressive education," and do not know much more about it now, but I do know that it is possible to have efficient and successful schools without any frills. I might add that there was seldom any necessity for punishment, but parents and teachers did not hesitate to apply the strap when the need for it was indicated.

M. H. DOBIE

Vancouver, B.C., Canada

SIR:

Congratulations on your delightful article about progressive education by Gladwin Hill. May we have permission to reprint in booklet form for distribution to educational leaders throughout the United States in January?

ROY K. WILSON, *Executive Secretary*
National School Public Relations Association
of National Education Association
Washington, D.C.

SIR:

I looked forward to the December number of the *Atlantic* in order that I might add to my collection of Pickwick illustrations. I did not know I would receive a bonus until I found Mr. Hill's article. This article should be required reading for parents and teachers.

NELLIE L. GRIFFITHS

Professor of Education
North Texas State College,
School of Education
Denton, Tex.

SIR:

Since our own Campus School offers a program very similar to that of the college-sponsored school described in "A Father Looks at Progressive Education," my fellow staff members and I have a more than usual understanding and appreciation of points Mr. Hill made.

It seems to us that Mr. Hill was

trying to give a picture of what modern education can do for children, but was neither defensive about it nor antagonistic toward other schools. As professional educators, we do not expect that all articles will be telling just the praiseworthy parts of public education. We want discussion of all phases of the educational program. What we like in this article is the calm appraisal of a program.

R. F. HAWK, *Director*

of Campus School and Student Teaching
Western Washington College of Education
Bellingham, Wash.

"The Last Spring"

SIR:

Margaret Richardson's "The Last Spring" (December *Atlantic*) moved me deeply. In the several years that I have been reading the *Atlantic*, nothing else has struck me so much by its perfect sincerity and craftsmanship.

JOE CHARLES FRIEDMAN
Brooklyn, N.Y.

SIR:

"The Last Spring" is one of the most revolting things I've ever read. It would be impossible to convey the disgust my family and I felt after reading it. Perhaps it does contain an account of "reverence and love that overwhelmed" Mrs. Richardson, but that was obscured by the gory details.

MRS. JOE M. YOUNG
Columbia, Tenn.

SIR:

I am a paralytic, with total disability. You can see why that true account of a stricken home affected me. It was beautifully told.

I am a hemiplegic. I stumbled with that poor fellow and wept with him in his frustration and helplessness. I understand. My wife, too, is capable and brave. The children are kind and understanding. Tragedies like "The Last Spring" and my own crippling stroke have the bitter and the sweet—suffering and sacrifice, with love and trust. It is common—look around.

NEIL COTTER

West Roxbury, Mass.

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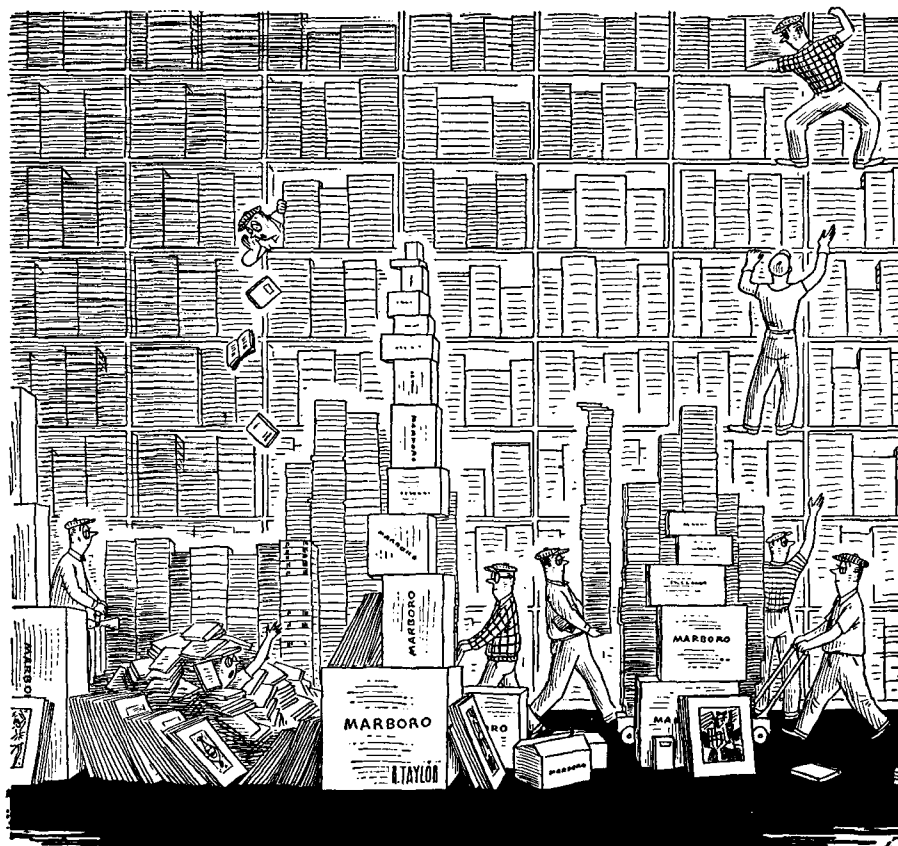
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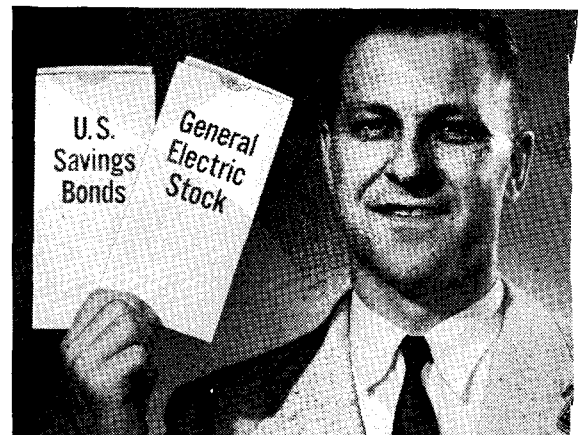
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In his new book, The Public Philosophy, which will be published this month, WALTER LIPPMANN has made a forceful analysis of the gravest issue of our time, the steady impairment of the power to govern which has imperiled the western democracies during the past four decades. He shows that this deterioration began before 1914, that Lord Bryce saw the warning signs in 1920; and he shows how deep-seated the disorder has become since 1938. The great question to which he addresses himself in the later chapters is whether this decline can be checked and to what extent Democracy can renew its strength. The deep seriousness with which Mr. Lippmann writes will be seen in this, the first of three excerpts we shall draw from his book.

THE DECLINE OF WESTERN DEMOCRACY

by WALTER LIPPMANN

DURING the fateful summer of 1938 I began writing a book in an effort to come to terms in my own mind and heart with the mounting disorder in our western society. I was living in Paris at the time, and I had learned that the decision had been taken which was soon to lead Mr. Chamberlain and M. Daladier to Munich. Little hope remained that another world war could be averted except by abject surrender, and yet there was no sure prospect that France and Great Britain would be able to withstand the onslaught that was coming. They were unprepared, their people were divided and demoralized. The Americans were far away, were determined to be neutral, and were unarmed. I was filled with foreboding that the nations of the Atlantic Community would not prove equal to the challenge, and that if they failed, we should lose our great traditions of civility, the liberties western man has won for himself after centuries of struggle and which were now threatened by the rising tide of barbarity.

I began writing, impelled by the need to make more intelligible to myself the alarming failure of the western liberal democracies to cope with the realities of this century. I had done a draft of the book when the fall of France made it evident that we too must soon be engaged and, moreover,

engaged alone if the Battle of Britain were lost.

In December, 1941, I put the manuscript away, knowing that so much was going to happen to the world and to me that if ever I went back to the book, it would be to start all over again. When I did come back to it after the war, the foreboding which had inspired it was in a terrible measure realized. Something had gone very wrong in the liberal democracies. They had, to be sure, defeated their enemies. They had avoided defeat and subjection. But they were unable to make peace and to restore order. For the second time in a generation they had failed to prevent a ruinous war, they had been unwilling to prepare themselves to wage the war, and when at long last and at exorbitant cost they had managed to defeat their enemies, they had been unable to make peace out of their victories. They were entangled in a vicious circle of wars that led to ever bigger and wider wars. Could it be denied that they were sick with some kind of incapacity to cope with reality, to govern their affairs, to defend their vital interests and, it might be, to insure their survival as free and democratic states?

There was no mistaking the decline of the West. Thirty years after Wilson had proclaimed a world at peace under democratic governments, the North Atlantic democracies were preoccupied with the

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defense of Western Europe and the fringes of the Eurasian continent. In less than half a century it had come to that. In 1900 men everywhere on earth had acknowledged, even when they resented, the primacy of the western nations. They were the recognized leaders in the progress of mankind, and it was taken as axiomatic that the question was when, and not whether, the less advanced people would have learned how to use the western technology, to hold free elections, to respect the Bill of Rights and to live by its political philosophy. Until 1917 the model for a new government anywhere in the world, even in Russia, was liberal democracy in the British, the French, or the American style.

But by the end of 1920 things had taken a sharp turn. Lord Bryce was then finishing his *Modern Democracies*, and though he still wrote in the pre-war manner that "democracy is spreading" and that "the number of democracies in the world has doubled within fifteen years," he had seen the warning signs and he was troubled. It might not be "really helpful to the younger generation," he wrote in the preface, but he could not "repress the pessimism of experience." He had to say that "although democracy has spread, and although no country that has tried it shows any signs of forsaking it, we are not yet entitled to hold with the men of 1789 that it is the natural and, therefore, in the long run, the inevitable form of government. Much has happened since the rising sun of liberty dazzled the eyes of the States-General at Versailles. Popular government has not yet been proved to guarantee, always and everywhere, good government. If it be improbable, yet it is not unthinkable that, as in many countries impatience with tangible evils substituted democracy for monarchy or oligarchy, a like impatience might someday reverse the process."

Three years later Mussolini marched on Rome, and Italy became the first of the bigger democracies to "reverse the process." In retrospect we can now see that what Lord Bryce, writing at the end of the First World War, thought was the pessimism of experience was in fact the intuition of a sensitive and knowing observer. He had felt in his bones, being too close to the event to perceive it, that a fundamental change in the prospects of democracy was in the making.

There had occurred, I now believe, an unrecognized revolution within the democratic states. By the third year of the First World War the cumulative losses had become so exorbitant that the institutional order of all the belligerents gave way under the stress and strain. The war had become, in Ferrero's telling phrase, hyperbolic, and the pre-war governments were incapable of imposing such unlimited drafts upon the endurance and the loyalties of the people.

The existing governments had exhausted their

imperium — their authority to bind and their power to command. With their traditional means they were no longer able to carry on the war; yet they were unable to negotiate peace. They had, therefore, to turn to the people. They had to ask still greater exertions and sacrifices. They obtained them by "democratizing" the conduct and the aims of the war: by pursuing total victory and by promising total peace. In substance they ceded the executive power of decision over the strategical and the political conditions for concluding the war. In effect they lost control of the war.

In the defeated countries the price of this was revolution against the established order. The Romanov, the Hohenzollern, the Hapsburg, and the Ottoman Empires collapsed. In the victorious countries institutions were not overthrown, rulers were not exiled, imprisoned, or executed. But the constitutional order was altered subtly and yet radically within itself.

This revolution appeared to be a cession of power to the representative assemblies, and when it happened it was acclaimed as promising the end of the evils of secret diplomacy and the undemocratic conduct of unpopular wars. In fact, the powers which were ceded by the executive passed through the assemblies, which could not exercise them, to the mass of voters, who, though unable also to exercise them, passed them on to the party bosses, the agents of pressure groups, and the magnates of the new media of mass communications.

The consequences were disastrous and revolutionary. The democracies became incapacitated to wage war for rational ends and to make a peace which would be observed or could be enforced.

2

A VIGOROUS critic of democracy, Sir Henry Maine, writing in 1884 just as England was about to adopt general manhood suffrage, observed that "there could be no grosser mistake" than the impression that "Democracy differs from Monarchy in essence." For "the tests of success in the performance of the necessary and natural duties of a government are precisely the same in both cases." These natural and necessary duties have to do with the defense and advancement abroad of the vital interests of the state and with its order, security, and solvency at home. Invariably these duties call for hard decisions. They are hard because the governors of the state must tax, conscript, command, prohibit; they must assert a public interest against private inclination and against what is easy and popular. If they are to do their duty, they must often swim against the tides of private feeling.

Perhaps, before going any further, I should say that I am a liberal democrat and have no wish to disenfranchise my fellow citizens. My hope is that both liberty and democracy can be preserved before

the one destroys the other. Whether this can be done is the question of our time, what with more than half the world denying and despairing of it. Of one thing we may be sure. If it is to be done at all, we must be uninhibited in our examination of our condition. And since our condition is manifestly connected with grave errors in war and peace that have been committed by democratic governments, we must adopt the habit of thinking as plainly about the sovereign people as we do about the politicians they elect. It will not do to think poorly of the politicians and to talk with bated breath about the voters. No more than the kings before them should the people be hedged with divinity. Like all princes and rulers, like all sovereigns, they are ill-served by flattery and adulation. And they are betrayed by the servile hypocrisy which tells them that what is true and what is false, what is right and what is wrong, can be determined by their votes.

If I am right in what I have been saying, there has developed in this century a functional derangement of the relationship between the mass of the people and the government. The people have acquired power which they are incapable of exercising, and the governments they elect have lost powers which they must recover if they are to govern. What then are the true boundaries of the people's power? The answer cannot be simple. But for a rough beginning let us say that the people are able to give and to withhold their consent to being governed — their consent to what the government asks of them, proposes to them, and has done in the conduct of their affairs. They can elect the government. They can remove it. They can approve or disapprove its performance. But they cannot administer the government. They cannot themselves perform. They cannot normally initiate and propose the necessary legislation. A mass cannot govern. The people, as Jefferson said, are not "qualified to exercise themselves the Executive Department; but they are qualified to name the person who shall exercise it. . . . They are not qualified to legislate with us; therefore they only choose the legislators."

Where mass opinion dominates the government, there is a morbid derangement of the true functions of power. The derangement brings about the enfeeblement, verging on paralysis, of the capacity to govern. This breakdown in the constitutional order is the cause of the precipitate and catastrophic decline of western society. It may, if it cannot be arrested and reversed, bring about the fall of the West.

The propensity to this derangement and the vulnerability of our society to it have a long and complex history. Yet the more I have brooded upon the events which I have lived through myself, the more astounding and significant does it seem that the decline of the power and influence and self-

confidence of the western democracies has been so steep and so sudden. We have fallen far in a short span of time. However long the underlying erosion had been going on, we were still a great and powerful and flourishing community when the First World War began. What we have seen is not only decay — though much of the old structure was dissolving — but something which can be called an historic catastrophe.

3

WRITING in 1913, just before the outbreak of the war, and having in mind Queen Victoria and King Edward VII, Sir Harry Johnston thus described how foreign affairs were conducted in the nineteenth century: —

"In those days, a country's relations with its neighbors or with distant lands were dealt with almost exclusively by the head of the State — Emperor, King, or President — acting with the more-or-less dependent Minister-of-State, who was no representative of the masses, but the employe of the Monarch. Events were prepared and sprung on a submissive, a confident, or a stupid people. The public Press criticized, more often applauded, but had at most to deal with a *fait accompli* and make the best of it. Occasionally, in our own land, a statesman, out of office and discontented, went round the great provincial towns agitating against the trend of British foreign policy — perhaps wisely, perhaps unfairly, we do not yet know — and scored a slight success. But once in office, his Cabinet fell in by degrees with the views of the Sovereign and the permanent officials (after the fifties of the last century these public servants were a factor of ever-growing importance); and, as before, the foreign policy of the Empire was shaped by a small camarilla consisting of the Sovereign, two Cabinet Ministers, the permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and perhaps one representative of *la plus haute finance*."

Without taking it too literally, this is a fair description of how foreign affairs were conducted before the First World War. There were exceptions. The Aberdeen Government, for example, was overthrown in 1855 because of its inefficient conduct of the Crimean War. But generally speaking, elected parliaments were not normally consulted in the deliberations which led up to war, or on the high strategy of the war, on the terms of the armistice, on the conditions of peace. Even their right to be informed was severely limited, and the principle of the system was, one might say, that war and peace were the business of the executive department. The power of decision was not in, was not even shared with, the House of Commons, the Chamber of Deputies, the Reichstag.

The United States was, of course, a special case. The Congress has always had constitutional rights to advise and to be consulted in the declaration of

war and in the ratification of treaties. But at the time I am talking about — that is to say, before the First World War broke out — it was American policy to abstain from the role of a great power, and to limit its sphere of vital interests to the Western Hemisphere and the North Pacific Ocean. Only in 1917 did the American constitutional system for dealing with foreign affairs become involved with the conduct of world affairs. From then on, the conduct of the war and then the conditions of the armistice and the peace were subjected to the dominating impact of mass opinions.

Saying this does not mean that the whole great mass of the people have had strong opinions about the whole range of complex issues which were before the military staffs and the foreign offices. The action of mass opinion has not been, and in the nature of things could not be, continuous through the successive phases in which affairs develop. Action has been discontinuous. Usually it has been a massive negative imposed at critical junctures when a new general course of policy needed to be set. There have, of course, been periods of apathy and of indifference. But democratic politicians have preferred to shun foresight about troublesome changes to come, knowing that the massive veto was latent, and that it would be expensive to them and to their party if they provoked it.

In the winter of 1918-1919, for example, Lloyd George, Clemenceau, Wilson, and Orlando were at a critical juncture of modern history. The Germans had been defeated, their government had been overthrown, their troops disarmed and disbanded. The Allies were called upon to decide whether they would dictate a punitive peace or would negotiate a peace of reconciliation.

In the thirties the British and the French governments had to decide whether to rearm and to take concerted measures to contain Hitler and Mussolini or whether to remain unarmed and to appease them. The United States had to decide whether to arm in order to contain the Japanese or to negotiate with them at the expense of China.

During the Second World War the British and the American governments had again to make the choice between total victory with unconditional surrender and negotiated settlements whose end was reconciliation.

These were momentous issues, like choosing at the fork of the road a way from which there is no turning back: whether to arm or not to arm; whether, as a conflict blows up, to intervene or to withdraw; whether in war to fight for the unconditional surrender of the adversary or for his reconciliation. The issues are so momentous that public feeling quickly becomes incandescent to them. But they can be answered with the only words that a great mass *qua* mass can speak — with a yes or a no.

Experience since 1917 indicates that in matters of war and peace the popular answer in the democ-

racies is likely to be no. For everything connected with war has become dangerous, painful, disagreeable, and exhausting to very nearly everyone. The rule to which there are few exceptions — the acceptance of the Marshall Plan is one of them — is that at the critical junctures when the stakes are high, the prevailing mass opinion will impose what amounts to a veto upon changing the course on which the government is at the time proceeding. Prepare for war in time of peace? No. It is bad to raise taxes, to unbalance the budget, to take men away from their schools or their jobs, to provoke the enemy. Intervene in a developing conflict? No. Avoid the risk of war. Withdraw from the area of the conflict? No. The adversary must not be appeased. Reduce your claims on the area? No. Righteousness cannot be compromised. Negotiate a compromise peace as soon as the opportunity presents itself? No. The aggressor must be punished. Remain armed to enforce the dictated settlement? No. The war is over.

The unhappy truth is that the prevailing public opinion has been destructively wrong at the critical junctures. The people have imposed a veto upon the judgments of informed and responsible officials. They have compelled the governments, which usually knew what would have been wiser, or was necessary, or was more expedient, to be too late with too little, or too long with too much, too pacifist in peace and too bellicose in war, too neutralist or appeasing in negotiation or too intransigent. Mass opinion has acquired mounting power in this century. It has shown itself to be a dangerous master of decisions when the stakes are life and death.

4

THE errors of public opinion in these matters have a common characteristic. The movement of opinion is slower than the movement of events. Because of that, the cycle of subjective sentiments on war and peace is usually out of gear with the cycle of objective developments. Just because they are mass opinions there is an inertia in them. It takes much longer to change many minds than to change a few. It takes time to inform and to persuade and to arouse large scattered varied multitudes of persons. So before the multitude have caught up with the old events there are likely to be new ones coming up over the horizon with which the government should be preparing to deal. But the majority will be more aware of what they have just caught up with near at hand than with what is still distant and in the future. For these reasons the propensity to say no to a change of course sets up a compulsion to make mistakes. The opinion deals with a situation which no longer exists.

When the world wars came, the people of the liberal democracies could not be aroused to the exertions and the sacrifices of the struggle until

they had been frightened by the opening disasters, had been incited to passionate hatred, and had become intoxicated with unlimited hope. To overcome this inertia the enemy had to be portrayed as evil incarnate, as absolute and congenital wickedness. The people wanted to be told that when this particular enemy had been forced to unconditional surrender, they would re-enter the golden age. This unique war would end all wars. This last war would make the world safe for democracy. This crusade would make the whole world a democracy.

As a result of this impassioned nonsense public opinion became so envenomed that the people would not countenance a workable peace; in 1917 they were against any public man who showed "any tenderness for the Hun," or was inclined to listen to the "Hun food snivel." Yet as soon as the terms of the settlement were known, it was evident that peace had not been made with Germany. It was not for want of power but for want of statesmanship that the liberal democracies failed. They failed to restore order in that great part of the world which — outside of revolutionary Russia — was still within the orbit of their influence, still amenable to their leadership, still subject to their decisions, still working within the same economy, still living in the same international community, still thinking in the same universe of discourse. In this failure to make peace there was generated the cycle of wars in which the West has suffered so sudden and so spectacular a decline.

Public opinion, having vetoed reconciliation, had made the settlement unworkable. And so when a new generation of Germans grew up, they rebelled. But by that time the western democracies, so recently too warlike to make peace with the unarmed German Republic, had become too pacifist to take the risks which could have prevented the war that Hitler was announcing that he would wage against Europe. Having refused the risk of trying to prevent war, they would not now prepare for the war. The European democracies chose to rely on the double negative of unarmed appeasement, and the American democracy chose to rely on unarmed isolation.

When the unprevented war came, the fatal cycle was repeated. Western Europe was defeated and occupied before the British people began seriously to wage the war. And after the catastrophe in Western Europe eighteen agonizing months of indecision elapsed before the surprise and shock of Pearl Harbor did for the American people what no amount of argument and evidence and reason had been able to do.

5

THE record shows that the people of the democracies, having become sovereign in this century, have made it increasingly difficult for their governments

to prepare properly for war or to make peace. Their responsible officials have been like the ministers of an opinionated and willful despot. Between the critical junctures, when public opinion has been inattentive or not vehemently aroused, responsible officials have often been able to circumvent extremist popular opinions and to wheedle their way towards moderation and good sense. In the crises, however, democratic officials — over and above their own human propensity to err — have been compelled to make the big mistakes that public opinion has insisted upon. Even the greatest men have not been able to turn back the massive tides of opinion and of sentiment.

There is no mystery about why there is such a tendency for popular opinion to be wrong in judging war and peace. Strategic and diplomatic decisions call for a kind of knowledge — not to speak of an experience and a seasoned judgment — which cannot be had by glancing at newspapers, listening to snatches of radio comment, watching politicians perform on television, hearing occasional lectures, and reading a few books. It would not be enough to make a man competent to decide whether to amputate a leg, and it is not enough to qualify him to choose war or peace, to arm or not to arm, to intervene or to withdraw, to fight on or to negotiate.

Usually, moreover, when the decision is critical and urgent, the public will not be told the whole truth. What can be told to the great public, it will not hear in the complicated and qualified concreteness that is needed for a practical decision. When distant and unfamiliar and complex things are communicated to great masses of people, the truth suffers a considerable and often a radical distortion. The complex is made over into the simple, the hypothetical into the dogmatic, and the relative into an absolute. Even when there is no deliberate distortion by censorship and propaganda, which is unlikely in time of war, the public opinion of masses cannot be counted upon to apprehend regularly and promptly the reality of things. There is an inherent tendency in opinion to feed upon rumors excited by our own wishes and fears.

At the critical moments in this sad history, there have been men worth listening to who warned the people against their mistakes. Always, too, there have been men inside the governments who judged correctly because they were permitted to know in time the uncensored and unvarnished truth. But the climate of modern democracy does not usually inspire them to speak out. What Churchill did in the thirties before Munich was exceptional: the general rule is that a democratic politician had better not be right too soon. Very often the penalty is political death. It is much safer to keep in step with the parade of opinion than to try to keep up with the swifter movement of events.

In government offices which are sensitive to the vehemence and passion of mass sentiment public

men have no sure tenure. They are in effect perpetual office seekers, always on trial for their political lives, always required to court their restless constituents. They are deprived of their independence. Democratic politicians rarely feel they can afford the luxury of telling the whole truth to the people. And since not telling it, though prudent, is uncomfortable, they find it easier if they themselves do not have to hear too often too much of the sour truth. The men under them who report and collect the news come to realize in their turn that it is safer to be wrong before it has become fashionable to be right.

With exceptions so rare that they are regarded as miracles and freaks of nature, successful democratic politicians are insecure and intimidated men. They advance politically only as they placate, appease, bribe, seduce, bamboozle, or otherwise manage to manipulate the demanding and threatening elements in their constituencies. The decisive consideration is not whether the proposition is good but whether it is popular — not whether it will work well and prove itself but whether the active, talking constituents like it immediately. Politicians rationalize this servitude by saying that in a democracy public men are the servants of the people.

This devitalization of the governing power is the malady of democratic states. As the malady grows, the executives become highly susceptible to encroachment and usurpation by elected assemblies; they are pressed and harassed by the higgling of parties, by the agents of organized interests, and by the spokesmen of sectarians and ideologues. The malady can be fatal. It can be deadly to the very survival of the state as a free society if, when the great and hard issues of war and peace, of security and solvency, of revolution and order, are up for decision, the executive and judicial departments, with their civil servants and technicians, have lost their power to decide.

6

WHEN I describe the malady of democratic states as a derangement in the relation between the mass of the people and the government, I am, of course, implying that there is a sound relationship and that we should be able to know what it is. We must now examine this assumption. We are looking into the relation between, on the one hand, the governing or executive power and, on the other hand, the elected assembly and the voters in the constituencies. The best place to begin is in the simple beginnings of our constitutional development — in the medieval English Parliament — before the essential functions and their relation had become complicated by their later development.

No relationship, sound or unsound, could exist until the functions of execution and representation had become differentiated. In primitive societies

they are not differentiated. Under the Norman and Angevin rulers the differentiation had not yet occurred. These rulers “judged and legislated as well as administered.” But by the thirteenth century the differentiation is already visible, and the essential relation in which we are interested can be recognized. There is a writ issued under Henry III in 1254, summoning Parliament. The sheriff of each county is ordered “to cause to come before the King’s Council two good and discreet Knights of the Shire, whom the men of the county shall have chosen for this purpose in the stead of all and of each of them to consider along with knights of other shires what aid they will grant the king.”

Let us note the dualism. There is the government, which means the king and his council of prelates and peers. Then there are the knights of the shires representing the men of the counties. They are to meet, and the king will ask the knights what aid they will grant to him. This is the basic relationship. The government can act. Because it can act, it decides what action should be taken, and it proposes the measures; it then asks the representatives of those who must supply the money and the men for the means to carry out its decisions. The governed, through their representatives, the two knights of the shire from each county, give or withhold their consent.

From the tension and the balance of the two powers — that of the ruler and that of the ruled — there evolved the written and the unwritten contracts of the constitution. The grant of aid by the ruled must be preceded by the ruler’s redress of their grievances. The government will be refused the means of governing if it does not listen to the petitions, if it does not inform, if it does not consult, if it cannot win the consent of, those who have been elected as the representatives of the governed.

The executive is the active power in the state, the asking and the proposing power. The representative assembly is the consenting power, the petitioning, the approving and the criticizing, the accepting and the refusing power. The two powers are necessary if there are to be order and freedom. But each must be true to its own nature, each limiting and complementing the other. The government must be able to govern and the citizens must be represented in order that they shall not be oppressed. The health of the system depends upon the relationship of the two powers. If either absorbs or destroys the functions of the other power, the constitution is deranged.

The western liberal democracies are a declining power in human affairs. I argue that this is due to a derangement of the functions of their governments which disables them in coping with the mounting disorder. I do not say, indeed I think it impossible to know, whether the malady can be cured or whether it must run its course. But I do say that if it cannot be cured, it will continue to

erode the safeguards against despotism, and the failure of the West may be such that freedom will be lost and will not be restored again except by another revolution. But for either contingency, for cure now or for recovery after a catastrophe, our first necessity is to work towards an adequate knowledge of the two functions, their nature, and their derangement.

7

IN ORDER to do so it is necessary at the outset to reduce the ambiguity of the term "the people." For it has two different meanings, which it may be convenient to distinguish typographically. When we speak of popular sovereignty, we must know whether we are talking about The People, as voters, or about *The People*, as a community of the entire living population, with their predecessors and successors.

It is often assumed, but without warrant, that the opinions of The People as voters can be treated as the expression of the interests of *The People* as an historic community. The crucial problem of modern democracy arises from the fact that this assumption is false. The voters cannot be relied upon to represent *The People*. The opinions of voters in elections are not to be accepted unquestioningly as judgments of the vital interests of the community.

To whom, for example, did the Preamble of the Constitution refer when it said that "We the People of the United States . . . ordain and establish this Constitution"? On September 17, 1787, about forty members signed the draft on which they had been working since May 25, for one hundred sixteen days. In Article VII of their text they stipulated that if and when conventions in nine states had ratified it, then for those nine states The People of the United States would have ordained and established the Constitution. In this context a majority of the delegates elected to nine state conventions were deemed to be entitled to act as The People of the United States.

The inhabitants of the United States who were qualified to vote for these delegates were not a large number. They included no slaves, no women, and (except in New York) only such adult males as could pass property and other highly restrictive tests. We do not have accurate figures. But according to the census of 1790 the population was 3,929,782. Of these, 3,200,000 were free persons, and the adult males among them who were entitled to vote are estimated to have been fewer than 500,000. Using the Massachusetts figures as a statistical sample, it may be assumed that fewer than 160,000 actually voted for delegates to all the ratifying conventions, and of those voting, perhaps 100,000 favored the adoption of the Constitution.

The exact figures do not matter. The point is that the voters were not — and we may add that they have never been and can never be — more than a fraction of the total population. They were less than 5 per cent when the Constitution was ordained. They were not yet 40 per cent in 1952 when, except under the special conditions in the South, we had universal adult suffrage. Manifestly, the voters can never be equal to the whole population, even to the whole living adult population.

Because of the discrepancy between The People as voters and *The People* as the corporate nation, the voters have no title to consider themselves the proprietors of the commonwealth and to claim that their interests are identical with the public interest. A prevailing plurality of the voters is not *The People*. The claim that it is is a bogus title invoked to justify the usurpation of the executive power by representative assemblies and the intimidation of public men by demagogic politicians. In fact demagoguery can be described as the sleight of hand by which a faction of The People as voters is invested with the authority of *The People*. That is why so many crimes are committed in the people's name.

The fact is that *The People* is not, as Jeremy Bentham assumed, the simple aggregate of living persons in a community. *The People* is also the stream of individuals, the connected generations of changing persons, that Burke was talking about when he invoked the partnership "not only between those who are living" but also with "those who are dead, and those who are yet to be born." *The People* is a corporation — an entity, that is to say, which lives on while individuals come into it and go out of it.

For this reason Bentham cannot have been right when he said that the interests of the community are no more than the sum of the interests of the several members who happen to compose it at any particular instant of time. He cannot have been right when he said that "the happiness of the individuals, of whom a community is composed, that is their pleasures and their security, is the end and the sole end which the legislator ought to have in view."

For besides the happiness and the security of the individuals of whom a community is at any moment composed, there are also the happiness and the security of the individuals of whom generation after generation it will be composed. If we think of it in terms of individual persons, the corporate body of *The People* is for the most part invisible and inaudible. Indeed, as a whole it is nonexistent in that so many are dead and so many are not yet born. Yet this corporate being, though so insubstantial to our senses, binds, in Burke's words, a man to his country with "ties which though light as air, are as strong as links of iron." That is why young men die in battle for their

country's sake and why old men plant trees they will never sit under.

In ordinary circumstances voters cannot be expected to transcend their particular, localized, and self-regarding opinions. As well expect men laboring in the valley to see the land as from a mountaintop. In their circumstances, which as private persons they cannot readily surmount, the voters are most likely to suppose that whatever seems obviously good to them must be good for the country, and good in the sight of God.

I am far from implying that the voters are not entitled to the representation of their particular opinions and interests. But their opinions and interests should be taken for what they are and for no more. They are not — as such — propositions in the public interest. Beyond their being, if they are genuine, a true report of what various groups of voters are thinking, they have no intrinsic authority. The Gallup polls are reports of what people are thinking. But that a plurality of the people sampled in the poll think one way has no bearing upon whether it is sound public policy. For their opportunities of judging great issues are in the very nature of things limited, and the statistical sum of their opinions is not the final verdict on an issue. It is, rather, the beginning of the argument. In that argument their opinions need to be confronted by the views of the executive, defending and promoting the public interest. In the accommodation reached between the two views lies practical public policy.

Faced with choices between hard and soft courses of action, the normal propensity of democratic governments is to please the largest number of voters. The pressure of the electorate is normally for the less painful alternative. That is why governments are unable to cope with reality when elected assemblies and mass opinions become decisive in the state, when there are no statesmen to resist the inclination of the voters and there are only politicians to excite and to exploit them.

There is then a general tendency to be drawn downward, as by the force of gravity, towards insolvency, towards the insecurity of factionalism, towards the erosion of liberty, and towards hyperbolic wars.

In the effort to understand the malady of democratic government I have dwelt upon the underlying duality of functions: *governing* — that is, the administration of the laws and the initiative in legislating; and *representing* — the living persons who are governed, who must pay, who must work, who must fight and, it may be, die for the acts of the government. I attribute the democratic disaster of the twentieth century to a derangement of these primary functions.

The power of the executive has become enfeebled, often to the verge of impotence, by the pressures of the representative assembly and of mass opinions. This derangement of the governing power has

forced the democratic states to commit disastrous and, it could be, fatal mistakes. It has also transformed the assemblies in most, perhaps not in all, democratic states from the defenders of local and personal rights into boss-ridden oligarchies, threatening the security, the solvency, and the liberties of the state.

In the traditions of western society, civilized government is founded on the assumption that the two powers exercising the two functions will be in balance — that they will check, restrain, compensate, complement, inform, and vitalize each one the other.

In this century, the balance of the two powers has been seriously upset. Two great streams of evolution have converged upon the modern democracies to devitalize, to enfeeble, and to eviscerate the executive power. One is the enormous expansion of public expenditure, chiefly for war and reconstruction; this has augmented the power of the assemblies which vote the appropriations on which the executive depends. The other development which has acted to enfeeble the executive power is the growing incapacity of the large majority of the democratic peoples to believe in intangible realities. This has stripped the government of that imponderable authority which is derived from tradition, immemorial usage, consecration, veneration, prescription, prestige, heredity, hierarchy.

Under the stress and the strain of the great wars of the twentieth century, the executive power has become elaborately dependent upon the assemblies for its enormous expenditures of men and of money. The executive has at the same time been deprived of very nearly all of his imponderable power: fearing the action of the representative assembly, he is under great temptation to outwit it or by-pass it, as did Franklin D. Roosevelt in the period of the Second World War. It is significant, I think — certainly it is at least suggestive — that while nearly all the western governments have been in deep trouble since the First World War, the constitutional monarchies of Scandinavia, the Low Countries, and the United Kingdom have shown greater capacity to endure, to preserve order with freedom, than the republics of France, Germany, Spain, and Italy. In some measure that may be because in a republic the governing power, being wholly secularized, loses much of its prestige; it is stripped, if one prefers, of all the illusions of intrinsic majesty.

The evaporation of the imponderable powers, a total dependence upon the assemblies and the mass electorates, has upset the balance of powers between the two functions of the state. The executive has lost both its material and its ethereal powers. The assemblies and the mass electorates have acquired the monopoly of effective powers.

This is the internal revolution which has deranged the constitutional system of the liberal democratic states.



An Atlantic Story



A Londoner who cherishes every vestige of the cockney, WOLF MANKOWITZ graduated from Cambridge University and within six years established himself as one of the leading dealers in Wedgwood. Now in his late twenties, he writes as he pleases, dividing his time between authoritative studies of the Portland vase, plays for the London theater, and fiction. His two latest novels, Make Me an Offer and A Kid for Two Farthings, are being filmed. Atlantic readers will recall his story, "The Finest Pipe Maker in Russia," in the November issue. We look forward to publishing a number of his other stories in the months ahead.

THE PORTRAIT

by WOLF MANKOWITZ

NOT very many strangers came to my great-grandfather's village, but when it happened, everyone knew and avoided them — not that they felt unfriendly, but because usually strangers came from the police or the army or the tax collectors, and who wants to talk to such people?

So, early one spring, a stranger arrived in the village and tried to start conversations, without anyone answering more than "Yes" or "No," and sometimes even less. Now this stranger carried a box on his back and wore his beard trimmed close to his face. He was a big man, too, and what with his red neck and the black beard he looked like a bull. He walked about the village the whole day, sometimes pulling out a book to write something, and smiling at people when they unsmiling hurried past him, until at last he began to feel that perhaps no one liked him very much. Just as he came to this conclusion he happened to be walking past my great-grandfather's workshop.

My great-grandfather bent over his bench working a piece of wood into the shape of a pipe bowl. Though he didn't look up, he saw the stranger; and furthermore, he saw the stranger take out his book and write something in it. As he wrote, the stranger looked up every so often at my great-grandfather's workshop until my great-grandfather decided that even if the man watching him was a tax collector he should at least know what he was going to get into trouble for. So he put down his chisel and went outside.

The stranger watched him as he walked up to the gate slowly. My great-grandfather considered meanwhile which would be the best way to address the foreigner. Should he call him plain "Sir" or "Your Lordship" or what? But before he could decide, the man ran up the path toward him. He clapped his arms round my great-grandfather and shouted right in his ear, "I have searched Russia for this face!"

And the stranger embraced my great-grandfather before anything could be done to stop him, still shouting, "My God — this is the face I have been looking for!"

By this time my great-grandfather realized he was dealing with a madman; so, doing his best not to make things worse, he got himself out from his grip and walked back a few paces. The madman stood there with his arms stretched out, a stupid smile on his face, looking like a bull smiling, and he said happily, "I never expected to find such a face in such a village as this, never."

Though he didn't quite see why a face such as his shouldn't be found in his own village, my great-grandfather decided not to argue with the madman about that. Instead he said to him, "If you don't mind my asking you, what are you embracing me for?" To which the man replied, "I have always known this face in my mind. Only now for the first time I have seen it."

Which made my great-grandfather think, "Who wants to argue with a madman?" though he said, "Well, I'm glad you like it, but if you don't want

to buy a pipe now I'll go back to my workshop." And he turned to go back into his workshop.

Before he could walk more than two or three yards the man rushed up to him and shouted again as at first, "You must let me have it!"

By now my great-grandfather was getting a little annoyed, because he was always a man with a quick temper. Once he lost his temper with anyone it was not such a good thing for that person. But still he kept polite and said to the madman, "Please. You only just now said to me that you liked my face and you didn't want to buy a pipe. Now you want it. Either you want to buy a pipe or you do not want to buy a pipe. I don't mind which." And he pushed the man's hand off his shoulder.

But the madman wouldn't go. Again he said, "You must let me have it. You must give me your face."

This was altogether too much for my great-grandfather. He turned away saying, "Please do me a favor and stop making jokes with me. I am a poor man with work to do."

Yet still the madman — he must have been really mad — wouldn't leave him alone. He shouted — he was always shouting — "I only mean you should let me paint a picture of you."

My great-grandfather, who had never seen a picture of himself, stopped with his back toward the madman — who was perhaps not so mad after all. He thought of a picture of himself which everyone could see and recognize and point at and say, "Look at that! Isn't it him to the very life? You know who that is? He is the finest pipe maker in all Russia. Why shouldn't there be a picture of him?" After thinking which he turned round and asked, "Why should you want to paint me? And how much would you charge?"

The madman, who was (as you can tell) really an artist, answered very quickly, "Believe me, my good sir, it would be a pleasure and a privilege for me to paint your portrait for nothing."

Which made my great-grandfather wonder whether there was something else behind it after all. But when he told the artist, "I wouldn't be able to have a painted image made in my own house. I'm a religious man, you must realize," the artist said, "You shouldn't worry about that. I will paint the picture here in your own front yard and everyone in the village shall see it, and then with your permission I will take it back to the city for other people to see."

So my great-grandfather said to himself, "If people want to see my painted picture and this madman wants to paint my picture, why should I make so many people disappointed? After all, this madman is no fool. Hasn't he picked me from among everyone in the village?" And he replied to the man, "All right, then. I give you my kind permission to paint me."

To which the artist answered, very excited, "Thank you, thank you. Let us begin now."

My great-grandfather, never having had his portrait painted before, said, "All right, then. Paint." And he turned for the third time to go back into the house. But the artist explained to him that he had to sit still for a while, and after a lot of fuss they brought out a small piece of wood for putting the paints on, and all the other things which he used for painting. There were so many of these things I haven't got the time to tell you all about them. But what does it matter? However many things there were they were needed for painting my great-grandfather's portrait.

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THE artist, who was a quick workman, finished the painting in a couple of hours, and all the time my great-grandfather kept asking him, "Well, is it finished? How much longer?"

But the artist was so polite, and told him so many times that this was the face he had been looking for everywhere, that my great-grandfather sat more or less still the whole time, thinking about how the village would be surprised, and what the rabbi would say, and how jealous Reb Sholem Pinsk would be that the artist had not asked him if his face could be painted. Of course, my great-grandmother was also there, standing near my great-grandfather hoping that the artist might be painting her into the picture as well. As for my young grandfather, he had run to all the houses telling them what was happening, so that more and more people crowded round the artist as he sat on his little stool painting. My young grandfather stood in the front of the crowd shouting out, "Now he's painting the nose. Now he's painting the eye," and so on, until the artist had finished, when my grandfather shouted out, "Now he's finished!"

Then the whole crowd, which had been watching very quietly, breathed out together, and no wonder, because the painting was the first one which had ever been made in the village, and what do you think? It looked exactly like my great-grandfather even to the eyes, one of which was brown while the other was blue. Reb Sholem Pinsk, however, was speaking in a loud high voice, saying: —

"Such excitement over a little picture like this! In Pinsk everyone is painted, not little like this, but big — almost as big as a house."

But no one took any notice because Reb Sholem was the only one who had seen pictures in Pinsk or anywhere else, and no one believed that he had been to Pinsk anyhow.

When my great-grandmother saw the picture she was at first very upset because she wasn't in it. She said, "How could he leave me out? Wasn't I standing there right beside the bench?"

Still, when she saw all the other women looking at the picture first up close and after from a little distance away, she decided it was indeed a proud moment for her. She stood beside the picture for the whole time it was in the yard with the crowd around it, smiling to everyone and bowing her head as if she had painted it herself. Oh, there was no doubt about it, the picture was very fine indeed, although my young grandfather was in the back yard having a fight with a boy who said it looked like the Tsar Nicholas himself. Everyone agreed the picture was a wonderful likeness except Reb Sholem, who kept asking:—

“Will anyone tell me whose picture this is? It is no doubt a very fine likeness, but surely it is no one in this village.”

However, who listened to him? They were all standing around my great-grandfather waiting there to shake him by the hand, to congratulate him and wish him long life. Everyone told the artist how clever he was, and the rabbi asked him if he wasn't grateful to God for such a gift to be breathed into his hands, to which the artist replied that he most certainly was very grateful. Then Reb Sholem asked him how much a man could earn in the city making pictures like this, to which the artist replied, “No money could buy a picture like this.”

My great-grandfather smiled, and poured out brandy for everyone, while my young grandfather looked round to see if any more of the boys felt like saying the picture was a bad likeness.

Well, the artist stayed in the house of my great-grandfather that night, as guest of honor, though the picture was left in the workshop because, as the rabbi pointed out, even such a good picture as this was in a sense a graven image and could not be kept in an orthodox house. My great-grandmother made a special borscht which was so thick it could be cut in slices, and there were plenty of potatoes as well. After everyone else had gone to bed, the artist stayed up talking with my great-grandfather. They finished another bottle of brandy, though what they talked about I do not know, because my grandfather was asleep on top of the stove at the time and consequently did not hear, and therefore was not able to tell me.

3

THE next day the artist went. Everyone saw him off from the village. Afterward they spent days talking about what an honor it was for the village that my great-grandfather had been painted. Pity the artist took the picture away with him. It was wrapped up in cloth my great-grandmother cut from one of her best petticoats. A picture like that could only be wrapped in the best. It was nice that after the artist had left and my great-grandmother looked about the house, she could find nothing

missing, which may have been because she had hidden away the silver sticks for the candles used on holidays and Friday evenings, and there was nothing else to steal in the house except the hens, which she then counted and found all present. It was, however, this artist and what happened to the silver candlesticks which he did not steal that brought the great shame of his life on my great-grandfather. This shame was not to fall for several months, but it did fall, and when it fell it was a very great shame indeed.

What happened was this. Later on in the same year that my great-grandfather had his portrait painted, my young grandfather was sent to the market to buy some fish cheap. This market was held in the village over the hill where they were celebrating a holiday called Lent in which for some reason or other everyone goes crazy and eats fish the whole time. There was therefore a lot of fish on sale, though there were also stalls with fruit, vegetables, and even a few selling spindles — which they make out of soft wood which grows in the forests near my great-grandfather's village — and a stall with toys. Still almost all the stalls sold fish. Which means, since the peasants can catch their own fish, that it will be sold cheaply. So my young grandfather was sent over there to buy some fish, although when he returned out of breath and red in the face, he had, strange to say, brought no fish with him. When my great-grandmother asked where the fish was, he couldn't answer, he was so excited and out of breath. Even when she asked him for the second time, “So where is the fish, you little loafer?” he still found it hard to reply, though in the end he managed to answer:—

“In the market there is a stall covered with pictures of my father.” At which my great-grandmother could hardly believe her ears. She put on her best shawl, and told my grandfather:—

“If this is only one of your stories I shall see to it that you are sorry for it. Telling your mother stories!” But he replied to her, “Come and see for yourself then. I am telling you — a stall is covered with big and small pictures of my father.” And he led my great-grandmother back to the market at a terrible pace.

When she got there my great-grandmother walked through the crowds looking all round, my grandfather following, eating an apple which he had found near a stall which happened to be selling apples. When he was about to eat the core, my great-grandmother stopped, turned round, and said to him, “Can I see this stall with pictures anywhere? Am I blind?”

My grandfather was so annoyed at not being believed the whole time, he threw away what was left of the apple core (there was very little), swallowed what was in his mouth, and shouted:—

“How do you expect to find it? Are you leading me or am I leading you? If you will only let me

show the way instead of running everywhere like a squirrel, I will show you this stall with pictures of my father on it." He was very annoyed.

Then he ran ahead so fast that my great-grandmother had trouble keeping sight of him. At last she saw him stop at a little stall at the end of the market. She hurried toward it promising herself she would see he had some of the nonsense knocked out of him even if he had told her the truth for a change. But she stopped before she got up to him. She stopped because on a large banner hung across the stall was a big ikon. And the face of the ikon — God should have forbidden it — was the face of my pious great-grandfather.

She was even more shocked when, on coming closer to the stall, she found that *all* the faces of *all* the ikons on the stall were the face of my great-grandfather. Big ikons or little ones, there was no difference in the faces, and each one of them had the name of a different saint written underneath it, though of course they were not different saints, they were all my great-grandfather.

Well, my great-grandmother blushed for shame. That a pious man like my great-grandfather should have a thing like this happen to him! She didn't wait to ask the orthodox man who kept the stall any questions. She ran straight back to the workshop to tell my great-grandfather, though she remembered to shout as she passed my grandfather that he should buy some fish.

While his mother was away my grandfather went back to the apple stall to see if he could find any more apples. On the way he met a friend, and they decided that my grandfather should find apples while his friend asked the peasant whose stall it was and how much he would take for six pounds of apples. After they had done this, the friend explaining at length to the peasant that the apples were too dear, they went to a quiet part of the market and ate the apples which my grandfather had carried away in the legs of his trousers, which were tied at the outside with string.

Meanwhile my great-grandmother was explaining what she had seen to my great-grandfather, who was (as you might expect) struck dumb by the news. He was unable to think, so full was his mind of big and small ikons, all with his face painted on them. He also saw with his mind's eye Reb Sholem Pinsk holding these ikons close to his face to see them properly, then looking round and laughing and rubbing his hands, telling everyone in the world about this great shame that had fallen upon my great-grandfather. After watching such things in his mind for so long that my great-grandmother thought he was never going to answer, he pulled on his coat and rushed out of the house without a word.

My great-grandfather hurried to the market, found the stall, and stood dumbly looking at the ikons. While he wondered what to do, my grand-

father was still eating apples with his friend, and already they were beginning to feel slight pains in the stomach though they still went on eating. My great-grandfather at last decided that all he could do was buy the ikons and bury them. He was about to speak to the orthodox man who kept the stall when the man said to him: —

"Haven't I met you somewhere, in Lutzen perhaps? I seem to know your face. Yes, yes, it is Mendel the Carrier, surely."

My great-grandfather said no, he was not Mendel the Carrier. He was in fact a pipe maker, and he would like to buy all the ikons on the man's stall. The man looked in amazement and said: —

"What should an orthodox man with such side curls be doing with all these images, and anyhow, can any man be so religious as to want so many ikons?"

My great-grandfather said to him not to mind, that he wanted to make presents to all the peasants who were his customers, and that the man should make him a fair price for all the ikons. Well, naturally they argued for a long time, the man explaining that he had paid a big price for them but that's how he was in business — he always paid too much for his goods; still, seeing as my great-grandfather was such a generous fellow, he would only ask him for six rubles for the whole lot complete.

"What? Six rubles? Am I made of money?" inquired my great-grandfather.

The man said all right, it was a terrible loss to him but he would take five rubles. Eventually, when my great-grandfather offered him two rubles, he said it was robbery but he would take three rubles and a pipe. All my great-grandfather had to do now was to find three rubles, and from where was he going to get so much money? A man can work a whole week and keep a family on a ruble, so where was he going to get three rubles from? There was only one man who could spare so much money in the village — Asher the Moneylender; but you think Asher was a moneylender because he was fond of giving people money? No. Asher always had to have something as security before he could give any money, and what did my great-grandfather have which might be a security for three rubles? I have already mentioned them. He had a pair of silver candlesticks for the Sabbath and for holidays.

4.

Now a man may sell his animals or his piece of land or his cherry trees. He may even pawn his book if he has one, or his wife's beads or anything else he likes, but he may not pawn his silver candlesticks. He may not pawn them because they are not really his. They belong to his father, and to his son and to his son's son, and how will he keep the Sabbath without his candlesticks, where will

his wife put the candles so that she can light them when the sun goes down, and everyone can sit around the table, and say prayers, and eat supper with the candles burning on the table, and people passing outside seeing the light from the candles and everyone looking forward to worshipping God and doing no work the next day? Obviously a man can't pawn or sell his silver candlesticks. Without them his carry-on can fall to pieces. But in spite of this my great-grandfather was thinking about pawning his candlesticks. He asked himself which was the greater shame, to do that or to be in every peasant's hut under false pretenses as Saint This and Saint That. While he could work to get back the candlesticks, what could he do to make up for being a saint under false pretenses in the peasants' huts?

So he regretfully wrapped up the candlesticks in his coat and went out to pawn them, leaving my great-grandmother crying in the kitchen. He knew Asher never spoke about who came to him for money, but the whole way over to Asher's house he saw himself on pieces of wood hanging up in the corners of cottages all over Russia with lights burning in front of him and peasants praying to him. Believe me, it was far better to pawn the candlesticks, even if it was the greatest shame that ever fell upon my great-grandfather.

After he had seen Asher the Moneylender and argued about how much the candlesticks were worth, and had been offered a ruble, then two rubles, he finally took three and a half rubles, promising to pay Asher back four — because this, after all, was how Asher made his living. My great-grandfather then rushed back to the market, where the orthodox man had already tied up all the ikons into a big parcel. He gave the parcel to my great-grandfather and said to him: —

"For such a man as you who will spend money to make the peasants happy, I have a special gift." And he handed him a little crucifix which he swore was made out of wood from the original cross.

All this time my grandfather was still with his friend, and as they rubbed their stomachs they said what rotten apples the peasants sold, and how they made a mistake to bother to steal them. My great-grandfather didn't notice them but took the parcel home, putting the little crucifix in his pocket. He took the ikons into his workshop to wait until night came when he could bury them. Meanwhile, my great-grandmother still cried in the kitchen, lamenting the loss of the candlesticks, for how could my great-grandfather ever pay Asher back, and why had such a shame fallen upon the family and upon the whole village?

All day my great-grandfather would not eat. He spoke to no one and did no work. At last he came to the conclusion that somehow or other he must get his money back for the ikons — he simply couldn't afford to bury three rubles and the family

candlesticks. But how to do it? He thought and thought and at last came to a solution. He sat up all night carving small faces out of soft wood. Though they weren't very good likenesses of anyone, you could see they were faces. These he nailed onto the ikons, and then packed the whole lot up again. He would take them the very next day to the market and sell them — a brilliant plan of campaign.

Which is what he did. But when he got to the market and set out the ikons, none of the peasants fancied them. My great-grandfather stood there with my young grandfather, feeling more and more certain he would never get back the candlesticks, and my great-grandmother would cry in the kitchen for years without stopping. He got so tired of waiting to sell an ikon, even one, that he went off for a glass of brandy to help him forget his troubles. He drank two or three brandies, but with each drink he only felt his troubles more and more. He began to sing a song to cheer himself up, but in spite of the fact it was a drinking song and consequently very happy, he began to cry a little, the tears dropping onto his beard. At last he decided he was wasting more money sitting there drinking only to get more miserable. He left the inn and found his way back to where my young grandfather was looking after the ikons.

When he finally got there my great-grandfather rubbed his eyes in amazement. What should he see but my young grandfather lying on the ground sleeping, with not a single ikon left. My great-grandfather knew at once they had all been stolen, he had done right to get more miserable. It was his great bad luck to have only such a boy as my grandfather to leave in charge of things. He pushed him with his foot, shouting: —

"You fool, you! What have you done with all the ikons? You have let them get stolen while you sleep."

My young grandfather jumped up and shouted right back, "What do you think this is, then?" He shook his pockets and they jingled like mad. Then he took money out of them and gave it to my great-grandfather.

When my great-grandfather realized that the candlesticks were saved, he wept over my grandfather and blessed him, and finally asked him how this miracle had happened. My grandfather explained, "I hung the ikons upside down one by one. A religious peasant may not see a saint treated like that. They bought to save them from being hung upside down."

Still weeping my great-grandfather thanked God for such a son and went at once to Asher the Moneylender.

But at the same time, although everything came out all right in the eleventh hour, it was a shame on the family that even for a day the Sabbath candlesticks should be in pawn.

Subversive?

Dean of the School of Education at Syracuse University, VIRGIL M.

ROGERS came to his position after more than thirty years of service in the public schools. As teacher, principal, and superintendent he constantly had to evaluate the textbooks used in the schools. He is therefore eminently qualified to discuss for Atlantic readers the problems which school administrators must face in the selection of textbooks.

TEXTBOOKS UNDER FIRE

by VIRGIL M. ROGERS

1

NO CLAIRVOYANCE is required to see why the question of textbooks in America's schools has become a burning issue today. In this accelerated age, living as we do with the precarious sense of suspended time bombs, it is not surprising that many people experience a panic-stricken urge to hurry the educational process along by pinning the student's thoughts down to those which are "acceptable" and "safe." This age is constantly confronted with the power of the *word*. Even the least analytical among us feels in some way that the battles of the future will be fought in the minds of men; the really winning weapons will be *words*, and behind and dictating the words, *ideas*.

There has come about, therefore, in place of the almost reverential faith which earlier Americans had in education, a new sense of education's power, for evil as well as for good. People have come to feel — and rightly — that it would be well to take a long look at what "they" are teaching our children "before it is too late."

Obviously the teacher and the textbook are the two main factors in a child's formal education. As such they are bound to come under special scrutiny; indeed in recent attacks upon the schools they have been referred to as the two "main targets." One result has been the advocacy of special loyalty oaths for teachers, particularly in California. In the case of textbooks, one result to be observed is the springing up of local textbook reviewing committees, along with the adoption, on the state level, of measures to deal with certain types of undesirability, notably and almost exclusively *subversion*. Appointment of a Commission on Subversive Textbooks by the New York State Board of Regents, announced December 31, 1951, is an example. Adopted under section 704 of the Education Law, the Regents' resolutions provided machinery for the examining of any textbooks alleged to contain subversive matter in the event any person made written complaint "specifying such matter or statements in detail." Upon the national scene have been launched such publica-

tions as the lately suspended *Educational Reviewer*, put out through the Committee on Education of the Conference of American Small Business Organizations (CASBO) and described by the House of Representatives' Select Committee on Lobbying Activities as "an ingenious contribution to the encyclopedia of pressure tactics." Obviously biased and inflammatory, the *Reviewer* purported to serve as a guide in textbook judgment and selection.

In some ways the textbook makes an even more satisfactory target than the teacher. It is the clay pigeon that cannot fly even after the publisher and the author who set it up have moved on to the chronicling of changes which have taken place since the manuscript went to press. One question which students must be taught faithfully to ask concerning any book of "factual" material is "What is the copyright date?" They must of course know enough social history to be able to interpret the date's significance. For though many people feel that it is the *book* which influences the attitudes of the age, certainly an equally good case, if not a better one, can be made for the opposite view that it is the *age* which most influences the textbook.

For a number of reasons I have come to focus this discussion chiefly upon public school texts used during the grades through high school. The bulk of my own professional experience has been as a public school superintendent. Further than that, however, these public school texts will lie, opened or unopened, on the living-room tables of the majority of American homes; they will be examined by many parents; most important of all, their pages will be pored over by at least 80 per cent of the nation's children.

The college or the private school texts enjoy no such opportunity for scrutiny though some of them have come in for sporadic criticism. In general they are so far removed from the home that comparatively few parents are aware of what they are. Besides, the college students who use the books are more nearly adult and therefore presumed to be less vulnerable to subversion.

For it is *subversion*, however defined, which is the great contemporary fear. Therefore it is *subversion* which has occupied the most space in recent sparring over textbooks. It logically follows that the most concentrated attention would be given to books in the social science field; even more narrowly to those dealing with Russia, with our own country, and with our country's position in international affairs. Certain charges have been made, words quoted and misquoted, fears aroused.

This has been going on specifically since the late 1940s. It is fair, I think, to say that a convenient landmark was the appearance on July 15, 1949, of Vol. 1, No. 1, of the *Educational Reviewer*. Usually unsolicited, the *Reviewer* was widely circulated. The first number contained a "review" of Magruder's *American Government*, replete not only with misquotation and quotations out of context but even with some which had been baldly manufactured. When Fulton Lewis, Jr., used the "review" to fill a broadcast, fear jolted people into attack upon Magruder's in cities as far apart as Portland (Oregon), New Haven, Houston, and Indianapolis.

It is not my purpose to detail the history of recent attacks upon textbooks in America or to provide systematic refutation of charges leveled against them, though some measure of both approaches is bound to appear in the discussion. These valuable and necessary works have already been done by a number of competent agencies, notably the Parent-Teacher Association, the National Education Association (perhaps most especially by means of its Commission for the Defense of Democracy Through Education), and the American Textbook Publishers Institute. Such well-known newspaper "education editors" as Fred M. Hechinger and Benjamin Fine have written out of their thoughtful interest, as have such novelists as Robert Shaplen and John Hersey.

That so much has already been written is good to know. For, having watched events from the perspective of national committees and having had also to deal with them on a day-to-day basis in the community where I was employed as superintendent of schools, I have come to the conclusion that *communication* is the crying need in all our attempts to solve problems. That of course includes *listening*, which parents are sometimes surprised to find a teacher listing as something to be taught.

It includes also *definition*. This means no mere recitation of a book-given definition, but the forcing of the individual mind to hew out its own honest phrasing for those large concepts which with such loose ease we call Truth, Democracy, Justice, Freedom, the American Way. And Subversion. Then we can all rightly use the familiar names because we shall not be using them loosely.

The purpose of this article is not indoctrination, nor even defense of what is commonly called "the educator's point of view." (Incidentally "educa-

tors" differ as widely in their points of view as do lawyers, housewives, or ministers. The purpose of this article is *communication*.

2.

THE bulk of America's educators were shocked that the hoary and venerable Magruder's, which had so weathered the competition as to have run into some thirty-odd editions, could have become overnight the object of attack. It had been so widely used for so long that it must have been generally available for the checking of quotations before anyone joined the hue and cry against it!

Indeed, to the educator perhaps the most heart-breaking aspect of these experiences has been the glaring evidence that we have been ineffectual in the past. Many of these trigger-happy critics were the products of our schools. We thought we had done a better job in teaching that a devotion to scholarly truth demands weighing and checking *before* the rush into action. To face the fact that people trained in our own schools should see no difference between Magruder's definition of democracy as quoted by the *Reviewer* and as actually appearing in the book was to know bitter disillusion. Magruder, said the *Reviewer*, defined democracy as "that form of government in which the sovereign power is in the hands of the people collectively." At this point Magruder had a comma and this addition: "*and is expressed by them either directly or indirectly through elected representatives.*" (Italics mine.)

Personal shocks were experienced too by many teachers and school administrators in their individual communities. How many parallels there were, large and small, to my own amazed encounter with the obviously laid trap — as though an enemy were to be snared — no one can even guess. Conversations with fellow superintendents have convinced me that my experience was fairly representative.

The hour was about 10.30 P.M. A Parent-Teacher Council meeting had just closed. Surely the day's work could reasonably be thought finished. I was called into a "committee meeting" to which I found a prominent professional man had invited also a newspaper editor, certain school board members, and a small group of citizens. Only the school people seemed unaware of what was to happen.

I was presented with several books alleged to be in use in one of the junior high schools. Their gay jackets indicated how recently they had come from the publishers. The "committee's" air of expectancy told me that most people present had already examined the books.

They were not familiar to me. I was on the spot. A leaf-through revealed that they were mostly about Russia and dated back to the period when Russia was our ally. A subsequent check turned up the fact that they had been the gift of a highly

respected organization in the county, presented with the purpose of promoting understanding of the Russian people.

Had the local press been irresponsibly hunting red headlines or had the board of education been less stable, the sequel to that late evening "committee meeting" would doubtless have been different. The fact that nothing particular happened — except that a "complete confidence" vote was adopted by the school board at its regular meeting a week later — did not decrease my shocked sense of the significance of the encounter as revealing one frightening aspect of the tenor of the times.

It was in no way disturbing that the books should have been questioned. The shock came with the evidence of the careful forging of the steel to build the trap, the evidence that someone should have thought a trap necessary. Time had been consumed in making surreptitious trips to the junior high library, procuring copies of the books from publishers, circulating these about town until the trap could at last be sprung at the "committee meeting." All this when nothing was necessary except a simple call upon the superintendent of schools.

Typical of complaints about various books, each complaint embodying a point in someone's definition of what constitutes the *subversive*, are the following, quoted at random: —

"That history says wars don't settle anything. They oughtn't to teach our children anything against building up our military strength."

"That book is communistic. It advocates medical aid and hot lunch programs."

"Are they so hard up for illustrations that they have to put in pictures of strikers on a picket line? There's enough of that in the papers without getting it in school."

"One of the questions at the end of this chapter is, 'Can you think of any disadvantages to the capitalist system?' They ought to be showing our kids the advantages."

"It says here that TVA has reduced flooding and erosion and helped preserve the state's natural resources. Our kids are likely to get the idea that that sort of thing is desirable."

"Why do they show those pictures of city slums? That's what makes communists out of people."

"I object to this unfair attack upon advertising."

"How are we ever going to get rid of the United Nations if the textbooks keep playing it up?"

"There's too much in here about equality of the races."

Almost all the textbooks which inspired the above objections were attempting merely to chronicle events which had already taken place in our national life or to add still another detail to the picture of our present complexly heterogeneous culture. They were not *advocating* anything. But the person scrutinizing a textbook with a slanted opinion wants any mention of his particular anathema to be ac-

companied by denunciation. Conversely the specific denunciation which he desires would bring a swift protest from some advocate of the other side.

Should an actual case of subversive text be found, however, the duty of the finder to report it is clear — first to proper school authorities; then, if no action is taken, to the FBI or to state agencies empowered to deal with such matters. So many are the checks and balances employed in the production of textbooks, though, that it has been convincingly argued that a truly subversive textbook is a near impossibility. There must be significance in the fact — and I made the most recent check possible before sending this article to press — that not one complaint has been registered to cause New York's Regents Commission on Subversive Textbooks to come together since that body was appointed three years ago.

Subversion aside, the textbook author and his publisher must feel at times that it is an impossible task to steer a course clear of all the many points on which readers may be offended. Often objections are made to books dealing with sex education. Christian Scientists may easily be unhappy over chapters describing progress in medicine. Quakers may judge that a book puts too much emphasis on the nation's wars. Patriotic, religious, civic, and fraternal groups often complain that a given writer has not accorded them their "real" place in history. Businessman and laborer may read from a different viewpoint, as may scientist and artist.

Various sectional provincialisms are also brought to bear upon the judging of texts. Yet publishers, being businessmen, have to hope for wide sales all over the country. Maybe the eyes of Texas find that a writer depends too much on the map to show how big Texas really is. Even now any text which refers to the Civil War as anything except the War Between the States will pick up no sales in many a Southern community.

It is true that a person would not be likely to find in use today books which go to such extremes of sectional astigmatism as the *History of South Carolina* which — without the least question from my elders! — I studied as a boy. Unfortunately the title page is missing with its notation of date and author. But the time was far enough in the past for the words to strike us now as quaint when they assert that "Lincoln was elected by that party in the North that was most unfriendly and unfair to the South. . . . The people of the South saw that as president he would make matters worse instead of better. . . . President Lincoln had sent the vessels to open the war and there they were at the mouth of the harbor. . . . Lincoln begins the war." Not until after I had become a man did a reading of Abraham Lincoln's moving inaugural address enable me emotionally to return to the Union.

The problems of the textbook writer today have

increased several hundredfold over those of the forgotten author of my South Carolina history. In the first place, today's book is more likely to have *writers* than a *writer*. That is true of a particular junior high history on my desk as I write. Two authors are listed on the title page (professors in geographically far apart universities); the Study Skills Development is by a third person and the audio-visual material by a fourth (these two public school people); the annotated reading lists and the index (running to twelve pages, three columns to a page) are by still a fifth person. Yet even this complex lineup gives no real hint of researchers used, stenographic help employed, and conferences necessary between authors and publishers.

3

WHEN finally all these separate labors have been merged so that the book can appear under a title on a publisher's list, many obstacles yet remain between it and its destination, the classroom. Chief among these are questions of who is to choose and adopt and who is to pay the bill. Free textbooks are furnished in some or all grades in thirty states, while the other eighteen states have local option in the matter. Many districts in these permissive states choose, of course, not to assume the responsibility of free textbooks. Whichever plan a board operates under, members are bound to be cautious about book changes. If a board pays the textbook bill directly, they must consider too frequent change extravagant, though it has been estimated that only about 3 per cent of the nation's annual public school expenditure during 1952-53 went for texts and *all other instructional materials*. Even where parents and students pay the bill, change will bring complaints to board members that students can no longer buy and sell their books at second hand.

Most spectacularly, however, the lag between production and actual use results from cumbersome methods of selection and adoption. This is distressing not only to author and publisher but to school people as well. Much of the delay would seem to be unavoidable, since snap judgments can prove expensive in terms of both money and educational advantage. Often it is thought advisable to give actual classroom tryout to books under consideration before final adoption commitments.

But varying methods used by different states exhibit opportunities for appalling wastes of time and money. Even the ugly specter of political graft has been known to raise its head under the systems of adoption by state commissions and state boards. These groups are usually appointed by the governors of the several states. One can understand how in populous states textbook contracts add up to big business. County commissions and local boards of education, which constitute the legally designated

adopting authority in many states, seldom face temptation to graft because the amounts of money involved are relatively small. They are thus not so likely to be subject to undue pressure tactics from competing publishers who must make every possible effort to get their texts placed on the more profitable state listings.

Examination of adoption practices over a ten-year period shows many states to be liberalizing their procedures. For example, in 1936 exclusive basal adoptions were required in both the elementary grades and the high school in Alabama. These adoptions were made at one sitting and for a six-year period! Ten years later, adoptions were being staggered, and a new law permitted the board to use its discretion in the adoption of either a multiple or a single list based on committee recommendations.

What would seem to be the best method? Local adoptions are, I believe, much to be preferred over state because they provide little opportunity for politics to enter into choices and because state uniformity stifles local initiative and "freezes" curricula. The occasional mistake which is bound to occur is limited in influence and more easily corrected. My judgment is that the best we have is that method whereby teachers and administrators working together in committees make careful selection of texts to recommend for adoption. These may well be studied by a PTA textbook committee, or committees, in coöperation with school officials. Publishers' agents are glad to meet with such groups by appointment and can be of great help. Where it is feasible, public hearings may even be held. But the board of education is the legally constituted adoptive authority and its members should be given time and opportunity for a study of the books. In a situation of mutual trust and respect between board members and school people such a system works very well, each person being fully aware of his responsibilities and his limitations both legally and professionally. This method usually results in the choice of superior texts.

In general it may be said that any procedure which leads lay groups seriously to examine textbooks and to study related problems has something to recommend it. The practical working out of the textbook reviewing committee is, however, difficult. It requires at times unlimited patience. Often even devoted PTA members discover that the task is much bigger than they had thought, and they fall by the wayside. One great problem is the appalling present-day competition for people's time in the usual community. Narrowness of experience in the textbook field and unfamiliarity with the psychology of learning are other drawbacks to the functioning of the lay committee, though a spirit of sincerely open-minded inquiry can do wonders in remedying these. The dogged mistrust with which it is now the fashion to view the "professional" —

in contrast to the way his word was accepted as law in a former time, blindly — also may consume valuable time and hamper a committee.

The time element makes a further important point. Once a textbook is adopted, by whatever authority, it must be ordered far enough ahead for the publisher to make it available for the children when schools open in September. It is easy to see how two years may have elapsed during this period of selecting and recommending and adopting. The lag is sometimes so great that a text needs revision even before it gets into the classroom. If the general public could know how many pupils are today using seriously outdated texts, often without the counter-balance which a superior teacher could provide, they would be overwhelmed with amazement. In systems where subjects are rotated for textbook approval, each subject coming up maybe only once in five years, some books have been known to be in use after twenty years. Science courses in particular can suffer from this sort of lag as their materials stand in need of almost constant revision.

Such revision differs in kind from that which change in national attitudes seems now spectacularly to demand. Yet even this attitude-based revision is no new thing among us. The staid *New England Primer* itself found, by and by, that the letter "K" could no longer appropriately be illustrated with such salute to English royalty as

King Charles the Good
No Man of Blood.

Perhaps haste lest someone make accusations of Toryism was responsible for the awkwardness of the revision into

Kings and Queens
Are Gaudy Things.

But if our texts must be revised not only on the basis of outdated facts but also with each shift of attitude toward one or another of our allies or enemies, pity the poor publisher. Pity ourselves, too, for how shall we then be different except in degree from our erstwhile ally who, with a straight face, describes Gandhi as a "conservative" secretly aiding "the capitalists," and who purges away all references to her own great men when they fall out of favor, as though they had never lived?

4

ON WHAT points may textbooks legitimately be criticized and judged? Format, binding, typography, type of paper, general physical attractiveness are all important aside from subject matter. Date and edition, index and table of contents should be examined, maps and other illustrations assessed. But subject matter is of prime importance. Has the author sound background in his subject? What is the publisher's reputation for careful planning and editing of textbooks? Is the cost out of line

with that of comparable works in the same field? Is the material well organized and interestingly presented?

The final and overriding criteria, however, must always be suitability of the works for the students who will use them and approximation to the teacher's purpose in a given course. Does the book give scope to individual differences and will it help a teacher provide for those in her classroom? Is it in keeping with a school's philosophy? Clearly, for example, such a series as the Christian Social History Series (William H. Sadlier, Inc.), in use in many New York Roman Catholic parochial schools, would be unsuited for a public school classroom. Where as many as twenty-one different religious affiliations have been known to be represented in a grade grouping of thirty-two children, such section headings as "The Spaniards Brought the True Faith to the New World" and "The Blessed Virgin Appears to an Indian" (from *How Our Nation Began*, Sadlier, 1954) would be inappropriate; yet, attractively illustrated and mindful of the imaginative appeal of story detail to children, this series would seem admirably suited to the purposes of the schools in which it is being used.

Not all church-sponsored schools feel that their purpose requires special texts. At Friends' Seminary in New York City, choice of text is the responsibility solely of the teacher. No particular religious criteria are involved.

It must have become evident to the reader that the term *textbook* means different things to different people. Here as always we must be concerned with *definition*. Publishers and school officials feel certain that many complaints against textbooks stem from outmoded or imperfect definition — hence mistaken notions of how the text will be used. To older generations "the text," "what it said in the book," was all in all. Book material often was to be learned unquestioningly, word by word, and regurgitated in like fashion at testing time.

Educators know that in all too many of today's classrooms this antiquated use of the textbook still prevails. Yet the modern teacher encourages students to challenge their authors, knowing full well how ill-equipped will be any citizen of the future who believes everything he sees in print. A teacher may use many "texts" chiefly as references so that students may learn to check one against another. She believes that she cannot afford slavishly to rely upon one book to "tell all." Some school systems, indeed, feel that it is desirable to develop much of their own instructional material. Discussion of this practice — which has much to recommend it under certain circumstances — is outside the scope of this article. The reader is referred to the *Saturday Review* Symposium, April 19, 1952, for a short discussion of this point of view by Superintendent Gilbert S. Willey of Winnetka, Illinois.

Random inquiry about definitions easily bears out this confusion as to what textbooks are for. The high school student (New York State) who considers his text "what we have to learn to pass the Regents" is perilously close to the older view. The teacher who would merely answer obliquely that "some of my best friends are textbooks" is giving a definition to warm a publisher's heart. For to the author and the publisher, the textbook is perhaps foremost a teacher's aid, an extra teacher who will help her along. Publishers work conscientiously to provide an increasingly lush supply of aids and suggestions, even detailed manuals on how the books may be used, and trained representatives with whom problems may be discussed. For many a beginning teacher, isolated and without consulting service available, these can be true lifesavers.

Yet all sources of opinion have some measure of importance in the judgment of textbooks. Certainly the child's view ought not to be ignored. The parent who manages with a fair degree of consistency to be around during homework time is likely to pick up some reactions without too much difficulty. Parents' own views may be colored by what they observe of effects upon their children as much as by actual examination of the book.

"What seems important to us," writes Mrs. Barbara Sargent Turpin of Hollywood, Florida, in the *Saturday Review* (April 19, 1952), "is that the materials presented be of such color and quality as to hold the child's interest and stimulate an eagerness to develop the subject further. . . . Through parent-teacher work I have worked for and with the boys and girls. . . . Their wealth of knowledge and their retention of it astounds me. Surely the schools are providing good textbooks and are putting them to good use or this could not be so."

As a member of a carefully conceived and faithfully executed parent association study group, Mrs. Turpin concluded, as did some of her associates, that "the task of choosing textbooks is best left to people in the teaching profession, who understand how those textbooks can be used and the purposes for which they are chosen." Certainly the well-trained experienced teacher, especially in a system where she has the benefit of democratic committee work in her field and of curriculum consulting service, ought to have reasoned views when it comes to a choice of books. Such a person is likely to feel inadequate, however, to judge a text in another field, knowing so well the professional technicalities involved.

Least knowing of all, perhaps, because normally the farthest removed from the source at which a book is to be used, would be the hard-driven legislator asked by some constituent to pass judgment on a book. Yet even such legislators can sometimes be led to see the hazards of hasty action. Such was the case when the *Montgomery Advertiser* joined

battle "spiritedly" and "repetitiously" against what it referred to as Alabama's "book-toasting" Act 888, which followed a Birmingham real-estate group's attempt to censor a book entitled *The Challenge of Democracy*. Finally, on March 6, 1954, the *Advertiser* could announce editorially that "Act 888, the schoolbook labeling law, is now a storm tossed derelict, dismasted and down by the bow," with the bill's author admitting that it would be impossible to enforce. Yet originally there had been but one dissenting vote against adoption of the "preposterous bill" to "require that every one of the millions of books used in Alabama's schools (as well as the official reports of the state superintendent!) be labeled to show whether the author and those in the bibliographies are communists, followers of the communist line, or socialists." (*Italics mine.*)

The *Advertiser's* intelligent and courageous campaign against what it conceived to be curtailment of basic American liberties is only one of a number of encouraging indications on the educational horizon. Other newspapers have been comparably courageous and helpful, notably in Tennessee. Other encouraging signs have been the clearing of Magruder's *American Government* and retaining and restoring it after the initial attacks in Houston, New Haven, Trumbull County, Ohio, and other places. To the educator it is especially heartening to have been joined by lawyers, newspapermen, novelists and poets, manufacturers, Legionnaires, Congressmen, and cartoonists.

Not the least gratifying event has been the disappearance from the scene of the textbook fray, for want of further financial backing, of the *Educational Reviewer*. Perhaps it would be too optimistic to take the *Reviewer's* demise for a convenient landmark to indicate that the tide in textbook attacks has turned, as earlier we took its initial appearance as a mark of the attacks' beginning. Tempted, I shall remain cautious, and merely point out the fact that the *Reviewer* has disappeared.

Mr. Roy E. Larsen, president of Time Inc., strikes a heartening note in his foreword to the 62-page Ruml report issued early in December, 1954. This report was made for the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools after three and a half years' study on the problems of "Financing Public Schools in the Decade Ahead." Says Mr. Larsen, who, as head of the Citizens Commission since its founding in 1949, has been strategically placed to note shifting trends in national attitudes: ". . . we have seen many gratifying signs of progress in the relationship of citizens to their schools. . . . Criticism of public education is neither as widespread nor as uninformed as it once was."

If, as Mr. Larsen implies, adult citizenship education has been proceeding apace while adults have been busy examining their children's education

in the classrooms, this trying period of attack and attempted censorship will not have been in vain. Through it, certainly, school people have learned much about public relations and the need for interpretation and communication. Many school administrators are learning not to dash for the nearest exit at the first outcry against a "subversive" textbook; instead they will invite the public in so that the matter may be examined together with due attention to copyright date and checks of quotations. The hope is, of course, that among the group which turns up for the discussion there will be a goodly sampling of stable and relatively unbiased citizens along with the hotheads who are bound to appear.

Citizens groups, unaffiliated politically and not afraid to meet their convictions halfway, stand high among the current constructive forces in this country. The dedicated layman is one of America's greatest contributions to the world. The time that many members of the PTA are willing to give working for better coördination between the home and the school — fathers increasingly, as well as mothers now — is a never-ceasing wonder to school people who find in the dedication of these groups some of their own best inspiration.

American educators like to believe that at this mid-century point education in our country shows signs of at least reaching toward maturity. We like to think that we are now so sure not only of our destiny as a nation but of our essential characteristics as a people that we can at last cease, not without due reverence, to define *education* in European terms, and without apology seek an education indigenous to us. Declaration signer Benjamin Rush set down this ideal for the new nation's education in his *Thoughts*: "Education should be indigenous to the United States; not a copy of any foreign country's system." Perhaps we are at last making perceptible progress toward fulfilling his dream. Therefore good textbooks — written by mature people, in the hands of maturely intelligent teachers, published by businessmen who do not scorn to be educators as well — were never more needed than today.

These will not be texts which tell students what to think by following some party line, even one of anti-Communism. I have heard complaints from students which would lead me to believe that too much and too obvious condemnation of Communism can fail its mark. Their teachers, say some students, seem to feel they have to start in the very first day of school underscoring every reference to Russia with statements of how undesirable is her system ("Of course in Russia you can't do that!") and how desirable ours. "When it's all so darned

obvious!" A teacher might fairly be pardoned for wishing to make her own position clear through the well-known device of repetition, lest she be suspected of "subversion." Remembering adults who could not be convinced that G. S. Counts's translation of *I Want to Be Like Stalin* was not presented with a view toward making Communist converts, I find it understandable if a teacher dealing with immature and often extremely literal minds feels the need of pinning on a label every now and then to make sure no one misses the point. But the thing can be overdone!

To tell an American child — the inheritor of Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, Walt Whitman, and Abraham Lincoln — *what he must think* is to deny him his inheritance. Certainly any indigenously American education cannot, above all, do that. Would not such a perversion also show lack of faith that in the free market place of ideas "our way" will be able to hold its own? Are not our children discerning enough to see the discrepancies between history that glorifies our dissenters — the Pilgrim Fathers, Roger Williams, William Penn, the signers of the Declaration of Independence — and immediate attempts at censorship and stifling of inquiry?

The staggering task of the nation's educators today has become that of educating our children for the making of choices which to be intelligent have to be based upon carefully wrought definitions. No fear need then be entertained that they will not make their unique contributions toward the solving of the nation's problems. They may even do something about such queer inconsistencies of their elders as the desire to have their children spend spare time reading "the classics" while they themselves coin the term "egghead" to be used as a reproach against the "intellectual."

Many viewers must have been touched, as I was, at the response given by a Southern high school boy on a telecast last fall. Asked by newsmen why he had not joined the mob to protest the end of segregation in his school, he answered that he had learned in his school that there were better ways of solving problems and he had chosen to wait for them. It is not lightly said that upon this ability to make intelligent choices all that is uniquely the American Way depends.

In the educator's big task of preparing the young citizen to make his choices, America's improved — and improving — textbooks will be of great help. Recognizing the familiar American impatience to get things accomplished quickly, I would urge the interested citizen to watch for the steady growth signs rather than for the miracle. So numerous and well-marked are these signs that even as he rushes by, he can easily see them if he will.

The next article in this series will deal with the educational opportunities for gifted children. It will be written by Robert C. Wilson, Associate Professor of Psychology at Reed College and Director of Research for the Gifted Child Project of the Portland, Oregon, Public Schools.



Poet and lawyer and public servant, ARCHIBALD MACLEISH has answered many callings in his distinctive career. He has twice been awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry — first in 1932, and again in 1953 on the publication of his *Collected Poems*. He has given considerable thought to the use of poetry on the stage; he has written four verse plays for radio, all of which have had stage as well as radio production, and in the essay which follows he examines the critical dictum of his friend, the poet and playwright, T. S. Eliot.

THE POET AS PLAYWRIGHT

by ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

I

ONE would feel happier about the future of poetry on the stage were it not for the defensiveness of those who proclaim it. Poetry had used the theatre and the theatre had used poetry for thousands of years before prose took over but our contemporaries — even the best of them, even Mr. Eliot — go on as though the play in verse still required justification. “No play,” said Mr. Eliot at Harvard four years ago, “should be written in verse for which prose is *dramatically* adequate.” That judgment might have been expected from a Broadway critic, most of whom would put the period after the word “verse,” but it has a defunctive sound in the mouth of the most successful dramatic poet of our generation. If Mr. Eliot admits it, then prose is indeed the appropriate language for the modern stage and the poet can be welcomed only on those rare occasions when prose has already failed.

And yet dramatic poetry has flourished under many and various conditions in the past and ours is an age in which it might very conceivably be expected to flourish again. When an age is an age of actions as ours is, and when men live in confusion and die in ignorance for lack of that very perception of the meaning of their acts which poetry on the stage has given in other times and places, and which prose has yet to give in like measure or with a comparable intensity, a renewal of dramatic poetry would seem possible. We go back willingly enough in our generation to those mirrors of human meaning which poetic drama has provided to earlier men: we go back to *Julius Caesar* and to *Macbeth* and above all to *Hamlet*. Why then do we advise the playwrights of our own time, who know its temper and who live with its persistent questions, to write in prose wherever prose will serve?

An obvious explanation would be that ours is an “unpoetic” generation. We hear it said often

enough and every now and again we run across a writer who does his best, consciously or unconsciously, to prove it true. But the fact is, first, that we aren’t “unpoetic,” and, second, that it would not explain our attitude toward poetry on the stage if we were, and, finally, that the theory in any case would scarcely account for Mr. Eliot, who is so far from being “unpoetic” that he is one of the principal poets now alive. Books of poetry do not sell by the thousands of copies per day as some of Byron’s did, but they are read — Yeats, for example, and Rilke’s *Duino Elegies* — far more seriously and to far greater purpose. The reading of poetry for “pleasure” may have gone out with the first Romantics, and its passing may very properly be regretted, but the reading of poetry for understanding has more than taken its place. And not among the specialists alone. Upwards of five thousand people sat in a raw wind in the Public Garden in Boston on a June evening last year to listen to Robert Frost; and Boston, as those who read its newspapers are aware, is no longer the city of the Brahmins.

No, something more than an imaginary aversion to poetry is involved in our skittishness about verse in the theatre, and Mr. Eliot’s dictum indicates pretty clearly, I think, what it is. The trouble lies not in our feeling about poetry but in our feeling about the theatre. To say that no play should be written in verse for which prose is dramatically adequate is to say something, not about verse, but about the nature of a play, or rather about the conception of a play which is current at this particular time and place. Mr. Eliot is not saying that prose is better than verse for most purposes. Mr. Eliot is saying that a play, as we conceive of it (for he is not offering his advice to Aeschylus or Racine), is something which, by its nature, demands prose wherever prose will serve.

Before we ask the appropriate question, why? there is an incidental assumption underlying all this, as it underlies so much similar talk, which must be examined. It is an assumption which comes oddly from Mr. Eliot. I refer to the implicit idea that the choice of verse or prose is a free choice which a playwright may make on rational or at least technical grounds. Few poets — Yeats on occasion and a very few others — have been tempted to write plays in prose and no prose writers, with Mr. Maxwell Anderson as the distinguished exception to prove the rule, have been tempted to write plays in verse. What is more likely to happen is what seems to have happened to Mr. Eliot himself: a poet wishing to write for the stage undertakes to write *as poet* and makes it his task to teach himself how, as poet, to make his poetry dramatic. Or a prose writer, similarly seduced, labors to adapt his prose to his new medium without a thought to the possibility that he might turn himself into a poet first. The figure of the playwright with a plot in mind, debating with himself whether to write it out in verse or prose, is thus a figure made of straw. In most cases the decision will have been made in advance, and in any case the play itself will have at least as much to say about the result as the playwright or the critic who advises him. But this latter is a dark subject to which we must return.

2

THE question to be answered first is the question Mr. Eliot poses. Why should prose take precedence in the contemporary theatre? Mr. Eliot explains with his usual lucidity and patience. The difference between prose and verse on the stage is not that one is natural and the other artificial: both are artificial. The difference is that theatre audiences, either because they make no distinction between the talk they hear at home and the talk they hear in a prose dialogue, or because they are able to ignore the distinction when they do notice it, *think* of prose on the stage as natural whereas poetry on the stage, being noticeably different from the talk at home, *seems* to them artificial. Audiences, in other words, are conscious of the poetry as poetry but not conscious of the prose as prose. And this consciousness of the poetry as poetry is a dramatic liability, whether the audience likes the poetry or dislikes it, for it gets in the way of the dramatic action. Which seems to mean that it gets in the way of the audience's acceptance of the lifelikeness of the dramatic action.

We are thus given the measure of the dramatic superiority of prose to verse. The measure is the audience's willingness to accept what it hears as "true to life." The dramatic demands of the contemporary stage are the demands imposed by an audience which wishes to receive a particular illu-

sion from the actions it witnesses and the words it hears: the illusion that it is seeing and hearing *life the way it is*. It is this measure, Mr. Eliot is saying, which determines the superiority of prose for most plays. And it is this measure also which determines, for Mr. Eliot, the superiority of verse on those occasions when prose is inadequate and verse should take its place. He puts it this way: "... beyond the namable, classifiable emotions and motives of our conscious life when directed towards action — the part of life which prose drama is wholly adequate to express — there is a fringe of indefinite extent, of feeling which we can only detect, so to speak, out of the corner of the eye and can never completely focus. . . . This peculiar range of sensibility can be expressed by dramatic poetry, at its moments of greatest intensity."

That there is such a range of sensibility, a range which can only be expressed by that particular organization of language which poetry is — that organization which combines, as Coleridge saw, an unusual degree of order with an unusual degree of freedom from order — all readers of poetry will acknowledge. Only those who, through ignorance of poetry, are ignorant of the existence of the sensibility it expresses will question Mr. Eliot's statement. But what is important here is not the truth of the statement but the use to which it is being put. Poetry, Mr. Eliot says, is permissible on the stage in dealing with actions which impinge on this "fringe of feeling" not merely because poetry is capable of the expression of these feelings whereas prose is not, but because, *when such feelings are involved, the theatre audience will accept poetry as "true to life."* Mr. Eliot is explicit about it. The audience, he says, should find "at the moment of awareness that it is hearing poetry, that it is saying to itself: 'I could talk in poetry too!'"

Both the rule and the exception, therefore, are justified on the same ground — the audience's acceptance of the language in either case as true to life or lifelike. What is involved, in other words, is a preconception of the nature of the illusion the modern stage is expected to create. If you take the position that the language of the theatre should be the language which audiences regard as most like actual talk, or, in the exceptional case, as most like the language they themselves would use under the emotional circumstances, you are assuming that the illusion the contemporary theatre exists to create is the illusion of actuality.

Now there is, of course, wide support for this conception of the demands of contemporary audiences. In that part of our theatre to which the invidious, and not infrequently envious, adjective "commercial" is applied, the illusion of the actual is the standard target. Everything is made as much like itself as possible and the appetite which is satisfied is the appetite the newspapers arouse. But

because the illusion of the actual is the illusion served by the contemporary theatre in its most successful forms it does not necessarily follow that the illusion of the actual is the only illusion the stage can provide or our generation is capable of accepting. Nor does it follow that a modern defense of poetry on the stage must ground itself on that restricted foundation.

I have nothing but admiration for Mr. Eliot's gallant purpose to reconquer a place on the contemporary stage for poetry by bringing poetry into overt competition, as he phrases it, with prose. Prose has had the stage pretty much to itself for the past hundred years largely because poetry has refused to compete with it, preferring instead to retire to a private literary world of its own where, to all dramatic intents and purposes, it has palely perished. Plays have been written in verse for generations and no one has cared, not even the versifiers — least of all, indeed, the versifiers. If there is one body of printed matter to which the contemporary poet does not wish to return, it is to the body — carcass rather — of double-columned pages produced in the name of drama by the poets of the nineteenth century. Mr. Eliot is the first poet of distinction and stature to attempt to invade the public stage *as public stage* in a very long time, Yeats alone excepted.

But greatly as one must admire Mr. Eliot's good sense and gallantry, one must question, notwithstanding, the strategy he has adopted. Granted that the stage is a battlefield where a play must fight for its life in competition with other plays and under conditions established by the sensibility of the audience, whatever the audience of the moment may be, it does not inevitably follow that the field can be won only by emulating the contemporary masters and accepting the dramatic illusion they have so successfully exploited.

There are other illusions within the capacity of the stage and there are other illusions within the reach of the human heart. There is, for one example, the illusion — very different from the illusion of the actual — of the real. Virginia Woolf's casual suggestion in her *Diary* that the test of a novel is its power to "enhance one's vision of life" defines the difference. The illusion of the real is the illusion, whether in the novel or on the stage, not that this is the *actual* man, true to life, but that this is the man *himself*: not that this action is an action *like* life but that this action *is* life — what life really is. It is an illusion which the stage knows well and has known since its beginnings. The plot of *Oedipus* with its long-forgotten murder and its sudden rush of discoveries is as improbable in any actual terms as a plot could be, but the illusion *Oedipus* creates is an illusion of the revelation of the web of human fate which men have accepted as a perception of the reality of their lives for thousands of years. Shakespeare's *Tempest* is as remote from actuality as

Prospero's island but its metaphor is a metaphor which tells us more about ourselves than any newspaper has ever told us. Yeats's *Purgatory* has no prototype in actuality but it casts its shadow in the country where things *are*.

Moreover, as these examples suggest, the illusion of the real is an illusion which dramatic poetry can pursue at least as well as dramatic prose. The illusion of the real is indeed the principal business of poetry. It is to know our own reality as living, feeling beings that poetry is written and that poetry is read. And the theatre does not differ from the printed page in this regard. The power of Shakespeare's finest plays to penetrate the human mystery is a power given them in great part by their poetry, as every listening audience knows.

3

WHY then should a defense of poetry on the modern stage be written on the assumption that the sole illusion permissible to the stage is the illusion of the actual? The answer, in Mr. Eliot's case, is apparently that modern audiences will accept nothing else — that modern audiences wish to regard the stage not as a stage for art but as a peephole into actuality and that the playwright must accept that fact, shaping his language to meet the public expectation. An actual couple in an actual bar would not address each other in verses and therefore this couple on the stage, committed by their observers to an actuality as strict as that of a newspaper column, must not speak in verses either. To introduce verse would be to ask the audience to accept a dramatic convention and modern audiences detest dramatic conventions.

Well, they may think they do but the fact is, of course, that no convention could conceivably be more conventional than the convention of the modern peephole theatre by which some hundreds of human beings sit solidly on rows of soft substantial seats agreeing to pretend the man and woman on the stage are quite alone and no one else is there. An audience which will accept the convention of its own absence from the theatre where it sits will accept anything. I doubt, however, that the question really is one of conventions. I should guess that it was a question, rather, of the immutability of that attitude of modern audiences to which Mr. Eliot attaches such overriding importance.

There is no question, of course, but that the expectation of the audience is a limiting factor so far as the playwright is concerned. Does it, however, follow that that expectation is an immutable and fixed condition about which the playwright can do nothing? Do audiences accept the verse of Shakespeare's plays because they have been taught in school they should, or do they accept it because the expectations the plays arouse in them are expectations with which the verse accords? I should

guess, the latter. I should guess that what enables Shakespeare's people to speak poetry even to a modern audience is the fact that it is poetry the audience expects and, furthermore, that that expectation is one the play itself creates. The plays do not offer to present the world of actuality. They are, quite frankly, plays — works of art. Which is to say that they are, like all works of art, worlds complete in themselves: worlds in which the speaking of verse is accepted as naturally as the colors of a picture. Because *Hamlet* offers, not a glimpse of the private life of a Danish court, but a perception of the nature of the human heart, the language of poetry seems not inappropriate to it, even in ears where poetry is seldom heard.

But if this is true of Shakespeare why may it not be true for lesser men? Why may not the justification of verse on the stage, even in a time like ours, be found in the play itself? Mr. Eliot insists, and rightly I think, that there are no "poetic subjects": no subjects for plays which, by their nature, call for verse. A poetic drama may be made out of any experience of which men are capable, no matter how ordinary or, as the word goes, prosaic. But because there are no poetic subjects — no inherently poetic actions — it does not follow that there are no poetic *organizations of action* — no organizations of action on the stage which require poetry for their realization. An action so organized as to reveal not only its dramatic character, but its human significance, demands much of its language. And it is when the expressive demands are heaviest that prose gives way. Prose is a magnificent instrument of communication, but when understanding must be achieved, not by the mind but by the emotions as well, by the senses, by the whole being, poetry which reaches the mind through the senses and the emotions, which calls the whole being into play, goes on alone. There is no equivalent in prose for the lyric poem for the self-evident reason that it is precisely what distinguishes poetry from prose that makes the lyric poem — the ultimate margin.

The fundamental justification for poetry on the stage, in other words, is not the one given by Mr. Eliot. It is not that the audience finds itself feeling, at a given moment of emotional intensification, "I could talk in poetry too!" The fundamental justification lies in the play itself, in the illusion

the play undertakes to create, in the kind of understanding the play communicates. To go far one must go by art. To go farthest one must use art in its ultimate resource. The question at that point is no longer a question of the naturalness of the language spoken on the stage. The only question there is a question of the language's effectiveness. An audience does not accept the poetry of the end of *Antony and Cleopatra* because "I could talk in poetry too!" but because there are no other words than these to say what is being said.

But the point is not that Mr. Eliot's theory and example are open to question. Mr. Eliot's great reputation is secure. The point is that the conception of poetry on the stage as a mere means of expression, alternative to prose, the use of which is justified only in the case of certain inexplicable feelings, distracts attention from the true problem of the modern dramatic poet. The true problem is the problem of the poetic organization of action in such a time as ours. To regain the stage in its own character, not as a mere emulation of prose, poetry must find its own poetic way to the mastery the stage demands — the mastery of action. What poetry in English has lost is not expressive skill. The craftsmanship of the art of verse is at a high point in this country and in England. What poetry has lost is the power to imitate an action. It has become inward and reflective to such a point that the great metaphors of action, which are the true figures of the poetic stage, are beyond its competence. Until it can people the stage again with actions which are at once poetry *and* drama, poetic drama will not exist.

That end will not be achieved by adopting for poetry the illusion of the actual. The poet who adopts the illusion of the actual can bring poetry to the stage only by half persuading his audience that it is prose they are attending: the better he succeeds as playwright the less he will succeed as poet. Poetry will return to the stage, not when its presence is concealed, but when the audience is brought to expect it and, expecting it, to need it. That expectation only the illusion of the real can create. The poet as playwright must so manage his actions and his language as to produce the illusion that the world of his play is a world in which reality may itself appear as the God may come to the bridge in one of the ancient Noh plays of Japan.



Biographer, musician, and a writing member of the famous Drinker clan of Philadelphia, CATHERINE DRINKER BOWEN has scored a progressive success with her interpretive biographies, three of which have been chosen by the Book-of-the-Month Club. She has been increasingly attracted by law and lawyers as part of history, as was evident in her study of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Yankee from Olympus, and again in its successor, John Adams and the American Revolution. She interrupted her work on her new book, the biography of Sir Edward Coke, the eminent Elizabethan jurist, to deliver this talk before the American Law Institute in Washington.

BY SLOW DEGREES

by CATHERINE DRINKER BOWEN

I

LAWYERS and writers have much in common. We are concerned with words — how to say exactly what we mean and no more than we mean. We are concerned also with the behavior of individuals under given circumstances. Such behavior is, indeed, our stock in trade. Nevertheless there is between us a fundamental difference. I am not belittling my own profession when I say that lawyers and judges have a more immediate stake in what is set down on paper. I write a biography and perhaps it touches the emotion of my readers. I hope it does. But a lawyer's brief, a judge's rendered opinion, leads to direct action. Somebody goes to jail, somebody pays a fine or forfeits his money or his reputation. That irrepressibly oracular figure, Dr. Samuel Johnson (women do not like him), said a good thing: "Lawyers know life practically. A bookish person should always have them to converse with. Lawyers have what the writer wants."

For fifteen years, I have been writing about lawyers. My notebooks are filled with the characteristics of professional legal gentlemen: judges, ready to sum up or to instruct; law school professors, ready to make statements — and then qualify those statements; advocates, born advocates, with their wonderful, remorseless, happy courtroom voices that go on and on! I am grateful to lawyers and I welcome a chance to say so. Think of the material the legal profession has given me! My biography of Justice Holmes was four hundred pages and the one on John Adams was seven hundred pages. For the past three years I have been writing about that sixteenth-century legal figure, Sir Edward Coke, the man whom Maitland wrote of as "the common law made flesh." Three lawyers, then, have furnished me with superb material. The world likes to grumble because lawyers make their living from the trou-

bles of laymen. Here is one laywoman who for fifteen years has been making quite a thing for herself out of the troubles and the triumphs of lawyers.

There are two questions which lawyers often ask me about my biographies. The first is: "Why did you go backwards, in time? Holmes, John Adams, Edward Coke." To me, the natural progression is backward. Writing about a nineteenth-century legal thinker, a person becomes curious to find out where that thinker, that judge, derived certain of his ideas. So I went back to a fertile century, the eighteenth — and came upon John Adams. Then the question arose, "Where did John Adams find these practical, idealistic eighteenth-century notions about how to form governments and write state constitutions?" There was one place to look: England, in the seventeenth and sixteenth centuries. Edward Coke, for the purpose, comes in just the right place. His dates were 1552–1634, although, as I go along, I discover that Coke's story actually starts in 1215, with Magna Carta.

The other question I am asked is about laymen writing legal biographies: "Why do we do it?" It takes me five years to write a biography. Not long, as scholars count time, but long enough, as reporters count time. I look on myself as a historical reporter, a gatherer of biographical legal news. Not learned news. I am not equipped for that. But pertinent news which falls, biographically, into two categories. First, news about lawyers themselves, how they developed, how they were educated, what their outlook was upon their profession. And secondly, the broader news of what these men did, what they accomplished as it pertains to us millions beyond their charmed circle. And that it does pertain to us, it would be wasted time to protest.

The world has not always shared my admiration for those of the legal profession. The public in general is hard on legal gentlemen. As early as the fifteenth century, I find stringent regulations to keep down the number of lawyers in Edward Coke's native county of Norfolk, which, since William the Conqueror's time, seems to have been a legal nursery. Lawyers are a sturdy breed, they multiply and flourish. In the Parliament of 1601, the Lord Chancellor on opening day inveighed against "prowling and common solicitors that set dissension between man and man, pettifoggers and vipers of the commonwealth."

The Lord Chancellor of course referred to bad lawyers, not good ones. Laymen unfortunately lose sight, at times, of this nice distinction. The plain fact is that those upon whom the world depends, it seldom loves when dependence is past. The legal profession does not require my defense, certainly. Of all people in existence, lawyers are best equipped to defend themselves. When I was younger and tenderer, I used to apologize because I, a layman, had chosen to write long books about lawyers. I doubt if the fact needs apology or explanation. Goethe said the biographer "will deserve well of history if he can communicate the living quality that is concealed." I happen to be very much in earnest when I write the biographies of lawyers. In this connection I like to think of something that Justice Holmes's father said. Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes was defending, against a world of tough-fibered medical experts, the newly discovered contagiousness of puerperal fever. "I am too much in earnest," he said, "for either humility or vanity."

2

MY THREE legal subjects had certain personal characteristics which impelled me to choose them in the beginning. First, a deep pride in their profession. Holmes, Adams, and Coke looked on the law historically, in a long and, to them, magnificent perspective. "This abstraction called the law," Holmes said, "where, as in a magic mirror, we see reflected, not only our own lives but the lives of all men that have been." John Adams was not capable of that kind of diction. Few people are. But he had the same outlook, coupled with a hard, earthy, practical nature. Law, to Adams, was constitutional law; it was government. Quite early in life he became absorbed in the study of comparative government, reading whatever he could find about the Italian republics of the Middle Ages, the ancient city-states, the Dutch experiments. He was surprised when people would not listen to him talk about it. "I know not how it is," he wrote plaintively to a friend, "but mankind have an aversion to the science of government. To me, no romance is more entertaining."

Sir Edward Coke compiled eleven volumes of law reports (thirteen, counting the posthumous ones) covering about six hundred cases. I know because I counted them. He wrote four volumes on the laws of England, the first being the famous *Commentary upon Littleton*. He did this in his leisure time. He served often in Parliament, once as Speaker. He was Attorney General for thirteen years, Chief Justice of Common Pleas, then King's Bench. "True it is," he said, "that I have *been ever desirous to know much*. And do acknowledge myself to owe more to my profession than all my true and faithful labors can satisfy." "Knowledge of the law," Coke told his students, "is like a deep well, out of which each man draweth according to his understanding. He that reacheth deepest, he seeth the amiable and admirable secrets of the law." Coke was forever defending the English law, as against, of course, Roman or civil law, Continental law, the law ecclesiastic. Often enough he defended it where, quite palpably, at that stage of history, the English law did not deserve defense. Coke was an excellent teacher, an inveterate teacher. As Speaker of the House of Commons, he taught law to the Commons, gave them little lectures from the Chair. All his life he taught his law students at the Inns of Court in London. He said they complained because the laws of England were "dark, and hard to be understood." He had therefore, in his books, "opened such windows as make the laws lightsome and easy . . . so that any man who hath but the light of nature (which Solomon calleth the candle of Almighty God) if he add industry and diligence thereto, can easily discern the same."

Men who themselves possess great intelligence are forever demanding diligence from their students or their colleagues, when what they really look for is talent or genius equal to their own. Coke called this quality the "light of nature, candle of Almighty God." As for Holmes, do you remember his story about his teaching days at Harvard Law School? "I used to tell my students," he said, "that they could do anything they wanted, if only they wanted to hard enough. But what I did not tell them was, they must be born wanting to."

These three lawyers showed a deep, almost romantic reverence for their profession. Something else which they manifested was a consciousness of being intellectually alone and an ability to bear and to endure this loneliness. For such men the experience begins early. With Holmes I would say it began in his late twenties, when he was preparing a new edition of *Kent's Commentaries*. His friends noted his extreme absorption and it made them uneasy. Later, Holmes spoke of it as an adventure of sailing for the polar ice and letting oneself be frozen in. "No one," he said, "can cut new paths in company. A man does that alone." John Adams

kept a diary, voluminous, infinitely revealing — heaven's gift to a biographer. To watch young Adams wrestle with his particular devils, you might think Martin Luther wrote that diary. At twenty-four, Adams scolds himself because he cannot spend a whole day upon one especial book, say, Justinian's *Institutes*. Why, he asks, must he stop to smoke, to write a letter, or "to think of the girls"? Is there not someone who can help him, guide him, is there not some easier way out? "It is my destiny," he writes, "to dig treasures with my own fingers. *Nobody will lend me or sell me a pickaxe.*"

There is in men of such endowment a vast, continuing impatience, a desperate persistence which for the biographer is an awesome thing to watch. Holmes believed that a man who has not arrived by forty will never arrive. He nearly broke himself in two trying to get his book, *The Common Law*, written by that strategic date. It is to be noted also that intellectual men, who live by and through books, mourn continually that they are not men of action.

They show embarrassment because they are not soldiers, stevedores, boxers. Holmes had little complaint on this score, with his record of three years' active service in the Civil War. But John Adams, bald and fortyish and making himself surely useful enough at the Continental Congress, wrote frantically to his wife, Abigail: "Oh, that I were a soldier! I will be. I am reading military books. Everybody must, and shall, and will be a soldier."

Sir Edward Coke, on the other hand, never apologized for being a bookish man. On the contrary, he defended it. In the year 1601, as Queen Elizabeth's Attorney General, Coke prosecuted the Earl of Essex for treason. The Essex Rebellion lasted only a day — one of the silliest attempts of history. In connection with it, seven men were tried. All were convicted, six were executed. At the last trial of all, Coke seized the occasion to express his satisfaction that in the entire affair, though some three hundred were in prison, not one was a lawyer. "To the honor of the City of London," Coke said in the courtroom, "not one Inns of Court man followed the Earl of Essex. Not one scholar of the law. Not one." During the rebellion, there had been an incident where Chief Justice Popham and Lord Chancellor Egerton were locked into Essex House and left there for six hours, their lives threatened by a crowd of swordsmen in the courtyard.

Around midday, one of Essex's followers offered the Chief Justice his liberty. Whereupon old John Popham said no, he would not dream of accepting freedom unless the Lord Chancellor could go too. Coke told about it in court. And then he said proudly, "To their honors I will speak it, that in some gown-men there rest as valiant minds, where the cause requires it, as in them that wear swords."

For better or for worse, most lawyers are eloquent. One finds in legal gentlemen a provision of good, healthy *ham*. (Something else which they share with writers.) Eloquent men, especially those with a tendency to be quarrelsome, a bit quick on the trigger, like to protest how silent they are under stress. Holmes of course was too truly sophisticated to protest anything of the kind. Moreover Holmes was, as Justice Brandeis said to me, "an ivory tower man, raised in his father's library."

And Brandeis added that it was "a good thing for the Supreme Court to have an ivory tower man at least once in a generation." But John Adams was not an ivory tower man, and neither was Coke. They were hot-tempered, frequently embroiled in quarrels. John Adams, after such a fracas, listed his new enemies in his diary and then added loftily, "This storm will blow over me in silence."

No storm ever blew over John Adams or any good lawyer in silence. Take Sir Francis Bacon, who was Coke's rival straight along through their two careers, one in equity, one in the common law courts. In the year 1601, Coke and Bacon had a noisy row in Exchequer Court, on the first day of term. They slanged away at each other, and we know what they said because Bacon went immediately home and wrote a careful report to the Secretary of State, who happened to be his first cousin. (It was characteristic of Bacon to get there first with the news.) Bacon told what Coke had said to him and then added, "Mr. Attorney" — they called Coke "Mr. Attorney" in those days — "Mr. Attorney gave me a number of disgraceful words, which I answered with silence and showing I was not moved by them."

3

HOLMES, John Adams, Coke were concerned with the business of government. Neck and neck with the personal story there runs therefore the history of constitutions; written constitutions and unwritten ones. Lord Brougham made a remark, which he said he got from somebody else: "All that we see about us, kings, lords and commons, the whole machinery of state, all the apparatus of the system and its varied workings, end in simply bringing twelve good men into a box."

Teachers of the law will want that remark qualified, at once. Possibly it is a bit exaggerated. All I wish to say is that nobody could write those three biographies without finding herself frequently in the courtroom or the legislature. And no layman can spend time in either of those places without perceiving the extraordinary importance of *procedure*.

Observing Edward Coke as Speaker of the House of Commons, I saw his care concerning, for

instance, the matter of voting from the floor. (Those were the days when parliamentary procedure was still in the making.) When a division was called, should the Ayes get up and go out to the lobby to be counted while the Noes sat still, or the other way? There were not nearly enough seats to go round. A man voting Aye went out and lost his seat to somebody who had been standing. Consequently it happened that members actually voted against their conviction so as not to have to stand up for the rest of the day.

Small matters of procedure can have vast repercussions on us plain people, waiting outside. I'm aware that it is not advisable to judge a nation's legal procedure by what happens in big dramatic cases which are bounded on three sides by politics. (Wasn't it Holmes who said, "Great cases make bad law"?) In such trials, everything is warped by that huge imponderable which enters the courtroom: *public opinion*. It was that way in 1600, it is that way now. Academically, these cases are not typical of customary procedure. Nevertheless, the layman, the general public, does look on such trials as, let us say, a *test* of how well customary procedure holds up under stress. Specialists in any field avoid large, fuzzy words. Judges avoid the word *justice*, preferring, quite rightly, to speak of *the law*. But we laymen use the words *justice* and *injustice*. We happen to be the ones who are caught in the machinery. "Is it fair?" we ask. "Was it fair?"

Ranging, as a layman, over nearly four centuries of courtroom procedure, legislative procedure, I was particularly impressed with one thing. If reform in law is to come at all, it must come slowly or it will not stick. When it comes fast it booms-crangs, or else we laymen ignore the new law. Voltaire said something which I doubt would be said — I trust would not be said — by an American or Englishman in any century. And his context does not suggest irony. "Do you wish good laws? *Then burn the ones you have and make new ones.*" Occasionally, during a lifetime, we see the rules burned. We see a brand-new kind of tribunal set up — I won't say a court — a tribunal which burns the old rules and makes its own. We laymen watch what happens. And we do not like it.

For all my books I have a private working title, a slogan by which I operate and which has nothing to do with what publishing houses refer to as "the selling title." For Edward Coke my private title is three words, and they refer not to Coke but to public law — "By Slow Degrees."

Consider the seven centuries of Anglo-American common law, a big arc in time. Edward Coke comes in the middle, at a moment when some rather reprehensible notions were floating about the courtroom — leftovers from an earlier day when England's government was not strong enough

to dispense with certain legal tyrannies. For the biographer it is distressing to watch Mr. Attorney in, say, the trial of Sir Walter Raleigh — which actually was not a trial at all but a public inquiry into guilt already prejudged by Bench and Bar; and not only prejudged but proclaimed. Coke's brutality to Raleigh has become a byword. I see it quoted in Bar Association Journals, month after month. I wish those gentlemen would quote the context — what the Chief Justice said at that trial, his expressed reasons for not permitting Raleigh to have his one and only accuser brought to the courtroom to confront him face to face, as Raleigh requested. Should he permit *that*, Chief Justice Popham told the court, why, it would be to endanger the state! Everybody accepted the dictum. It was recognized procedure.

Right in the middle of this appalling situation, judges and prosecutor spoke proudly of the laws of England. "The law of England is a law of mercy." Coke said it in courtroom and out, and when he wished to be mysterious or especially impressive he put it, after his fashion, into Latin: *Lex Angliae est lex misericordiae*.

And yet, one has the conviction — or, rather, one hazards the guess — that Coke's very faith in English law was something of a foundation for our own future, here in the United States. His was not a complacency but a true pride upon which, as a judge and Parliament man, he acted, later, at peril of his life. Out of Coke's experience and the experience of those who followed and preceded him, there was shaped at last that system which America and England share and in which they can both take pride.

Seeing at first hand what lawyers are trying — *by slow degrees* — to achieve, I recall something Blackstone said. He referred to a specific point of law, yet what he wrote has wide application here as in England: "Legislature and judges in the course of a long, laborious process, extracted by noble alchemy, rich medicines out of poisonous ingredients."

Blackstone was not urging that two wrongs make a right; or, Do evil that good may come of it; or, The end justifies the means. I think he gave us one of those vague, perceptive distortions which sometimes carry farther than logic.

We laymen, then, watch and observe our courts, our judges, our public prosecutors, our public defenders, and our Law Institute. We do not look for a millennium, for that perfect state which will need no lawyers. But we are reassured by what the legal profession is trying to do. We like to know that among men wise in the law, there is a certain vigilance, the courage of persistence, the courage of patience. We laymen feel that the gentlemen of the Law Institute are reaching for things that will come — *by slow degrees*.



The Atlantic receives on an average as many as 1500 poems a month. They come as frequently from men as from women, and are evidence of an interest in poetry which never slackens. As an incentive for those writers yet unestablished, we shall from time to time devote a number of pages to the work of young poets.

THE YOUNG POETS

FLEMISH ARTISTS, FIFTEENTH CENTURY

by LEAH BODINE DRAKE

WHAT they loved, what their brushes proudly caressed
Was their rich immediate North. They delighted to portray
The tapestried room with its mirrored *dinanderie*,
The fur on the burgher's coat, the chain on his breast.

Piety insisted only the holy, the past was worth
Rare powdered lapis lazuli or ground gold.
This problem faced each member of the painters' guild:
How to honor both God and His sparkling Earth.

So their subjects are Martyrs, Flights into Egypt, Views of Canaan,
But Sodom, say, is a pepper-pot town in the rear
Where Lot's wife tinily stiffens, while hugely at prayer
Down front is the patron's wife in a horned hennin.

Angels are courtly *mignons* with crimped hair.
Paul suffers conversion near Damascus-gate
In full tilting-armor. The Baptist's head on a plate
Watches Salome fiddle some Flemish air.

Sometimes they concede slightly to the real East,
And then we'll get a Magus in a purple turban —
But his sleeves, as like as not, will be dagged and urban,
His squire a blond Flanderkin, hawk on wrist.

Look at any Virgin's Chamber, Annunciation . . . or rather, look
Through the room's usual little window . . . what
Do you find there? Palms? Orient domes? You do not,
But steeped market-squares, or Dutch seas pale as milk

Hemming green thrifty polders where the haywains pass
Bringing the harvest home to the castle's Dame,
God's Mother, who may sit by the Gothic chimney's flame
In a halo that's part of an elegant screen of brass!

THE APOTHEOSIS OF ALEXANDER

by IRVING FELDMAN

I

UPON a lake, His eye, the image of a bird
Drowsily moves among the clouds and calls.
He hardly hears its frantic note and word,
From so far away, so long ago, it falls.

Moving not He grows; valleys receive,
Hills lie under Him. His trees praise, His dust,
Rivers, cities, praise Him who can conceive
All things in pleasure without lust.

His heart, so slowly swelling, like a rose
Unfolds itself a century in Him
Who every moment is dying — to close
In Him who stirs the earth and leaps in limb.

For Him whose sleep is everywhere here,
India is not bed enough, nor is Earth;
Only the instant's narrow cot can bear
His waking word, its infinite birth.

Whose body is a leaf in whose flame all things
Of earth and heaven burn themselves green;
No stone denies, no heart unsays, no kings
Forbid His coming: He shall be seen.

II

QUICK Alexander would be more than man:
Then must he make the world a single coal
To heat the steel of wings and claws, and fan
It with glory's bellows of the great and small.
Since sleep, sleep and earth and love's short death
He fears, his breast must be the anvil
Where his strict heart hammers out his breath.
I am! he cries, and makes the sky his swill.

In the infinite black lake of God's eye
All things fulfill themselves, die, and near
The center. The flashing of His thought through that sky
Is an unending rain of seed; there,
Night by night the heavens turn and wheel down
And Alexander, dying in Babylon,
Must throw himself through the stars' fiery crown
And make all Asia's tongues of praise his own.

Since heavenly exile — babbling loneliness
And sick immortality — is prize of his passion,
A world is wasted to destroy the duress
Of being man. Yet even the evil are chosen:
Who leaps from God that moment falls to Him,
Plunging in His eye. See Alexander there!
From star to star he flings foot, face, limb,
Yet his furthest flight is but a falling near.

Fevered dying has transformed his soul:
All strictness of body now is husk,
And within, a world's seed desires the stars' long fall
That it may hurl its dawn through earth's dusk.
Faintly, within the husk's immense horizon,
Bird leaf and stone constellate
Alexander through a sky begun,
Newly risen, and trembling toward his fate.

Such yearning, such desire, such sighing breath
To die: that boundless wedding: giving birth.
Being, he is all praise, and the crowning wreath
About his head is God's coarse arm of earth.

WINTER LEAVES

by CLAIRE McALLISTER

WINTER, and the swarthy look of noon.
Later when the sun came out a wind
Swept down through the ditches in my head.
The hills stood in the sun, the air was wine
And I walked out a moment towards the woods
Before the hour faded at my back.

The streetways of the morning lay in mud
But farther on the world was blue and white,
And in the armpits of an oak I saw
In copper-colored leaves the deathbed wish.
A hunter disappeared between the trees
And all the hemlocks stood, confronting me.

Hunters, men who knew what thing they sought,
Struck my envy. Action simplifies.
The hilltops cried for climbers; I would climb,
Would climb till torn, had they not stopped me there,
The copper leaves that left me vaguely sad,
The brittle laugh of oak trees in my ears:

Visions meant for old remembering men
Or children, faces pressed at windowpane.
Another one could take the tender day
That freshened him and neatly drink it up.
I handled all the joy of crisp cold woods
Like some rare china-piece none dare to touch.

Not more in woods than town is freedom free;
The drinking songs, the conversations, clocks,
Babbled on beneath the frozen creek.
The footprints freeze upon the frightened heart.
Hollows whistled; hills were growing black;
Lamps lit, and, empty-handed, I walked back.

AFTER EVENING MILKING

by R. G. EVERSON

TAIL swinging like a walking stick to lop
A timothy, and casually chewing gum,
The Jersey ambles from stripping. Kittens lap
Pearls from the grass, quick tongue around each gem —
White milk, green grass, red tongue. Our eased cow goes
Like Dickens meandering in Fleet, a novel done,
Leaving the reader to it. Critic geese
Mock the familiar waddle. Above his den
Behind the silo (part of the farmyard group,
But wild and with strange eyes) the woodchuck stands
Observing the old cow move where shadows grip
Our pasture. Sky, the mightier stranger, stuns
The farm to drowsiness and having brought
Dark to the world, triumphantly is bright.

IN MEMORY OF DYLAN THOMAS

by ERIC BARKER

And death shall have no dominion.

LET us go down to the shore and look for shells
That gather sea-news for the sad at heart,
For he was always faithful to his name
And would return to where all memories start.

And wait, above the gull cries and the bells,
From moony acres where his sail outroved
All fins and swimmers breaking the seven seas,
For tidings of the great voice lost and loved.

And let us walk there through the shining fields
He covered from his heart with such green praise,
And talk with voices in the sabbath streams
Thrice blessed by him for all our earthly days.

And marvel at his birthday in our time,
So rich in marrying blood, all beasts and birds,
All creatures of the earth and sky rejoice,
Rebaptized in the rivers of his words.

Let us go down to the shore and look for shells
And gather tidings from the Lazarus sea,
Where death shall have no dominion, but to love,
Death is a lonely and a far country.



*Architects, builders, and air-conditioners have eliminated the draft from the modern dwelling place. In so doing, they have deprived the householder of the chance to pit his cunning against nature in many a minor — but victorious — skirmish. H. F. ELLIS, who is remembered for his book, *The Vexations of A. J. Wentworth*, tells how a London family, in more rigorous times, defended itself against a winter evening at home.*

BE IT EVER SO DRAFTY

by H. F. ELLIS

THERE is nothing by which so much happiness is produced as by a good cold current of air, or draft. From the earliest paleolithic times, when man crouched over his brushwood fire and brooded on the possibility of stretching an aurochs skin over the mouth of the cave, the struggle to keep his ankles warm has afforded him the liveliest satisfaction. And observe, it is the struggle that is all-important. To *be* warm and comfortable is nothing; there is neither achievement nor happiness in it, as anyone can see by glancing into a hotel lounge. To *make* oneself comfortable, to outwit by patient skill the malignant forces of nature, that is what appeals to something deep down and primitive in the heart of man and brings him contentment.

Between paleolithic man, crouching in his cave a hundred thousand years ago, and my own father, settling down for the evening in the early days of the present century, the differences were purely superficial. My father was perhaps more fortunate, in that, instead of a damp cave with a single entrance to contend with, he had the far more formidable obstacle of a rambling Victorian house consisting almost entirely of doors and passages and so cunningly constructed that, when the wind was in the east, even the heaviest Turkish carpets would undulate with a rhythmic swell. But fundamentally, in their obsession with the problem of keeping warm, the two men were at one.

It was an education to watch my father making his preparations for a quiet evening by the hearth — an education in that single-minded absorption in a task that is the secret of happiness. From the moment he came into the room, the battle was on. You could tell it from the firm, even pressure he exerted on the door as he shut it, the calculated pause while he waited to see whether it would snick open again, the careful adjustment with the side of his foot of the little woolly mat that was supposed to block the gap under the door. It was patent in the

series of tugs he always gave at the great velvet curtains that masked the French windows.

These preliminaries concluded, my father would stride to his chair by the fire, grasp it by the arms, and swivel it — in itself no mean feat — so that its back was directly opposed to the enemy's strongest point, the door. The chair was high-backed, towering well above the sitter's head, with great projecting wings that cut off the view on either side like the blinkers of a horse, and into this imposing edifice my father would now lower himself, supporting his weight with the palms of his hands on the brocaded arms and turning his head and shoulders round suspiciously to left and right, as though to surprise some stealthy undulation of carpet or curtain behind his back. This act of sitting was purely exploratory. He did not sit as a man sits who has come to stay. He never at this stage took up a book or crossed his knees, but simply crouched there, paleolithic to the core, waiting to see from which direction his enemy was going to strike him. And very soon, inevitably, he would rise and with a muttered "This house!" set himself to drag out behind his chair the convolutions of a folding Japanese screen, curiously enriched with elephants and pagodas. These screens, even when the wind was not in the east, took as much handling as a road map in a gale, so that my father would be a little out of breath when he returned to his chair and so warmed by the exercise that he often fancied the screen had done some good and would open a book with quite a triumphant air. His fingers would begin to beat out a contented tattoo on the arm of his chair, and when, some five minutes later, he crossed one leg over the other a stranger might have been forgiven for thinking that the battle was won.

It wasn't. No screen ever made could baffle a Victorian draft — and there are more reasons than one for crossing the knees. There is, for instance, the desire to chafe an ankle that has suddenly

dropped below freezing point. Not that my father was the man to be content for long with so defeatist a policy as mere chafing. He would dash his book to the floor, cross the room in five masterful strides, and attempt, with a sequence of extraordinary grunts and imprecations, to cram the little woolly mat halfway under the door, kneading it with his fingers as if it were dough and pounding it with his fists when it arched its back at him. Then he would stride back and throw himself into his chair — only to rise up a moment later, when scrabbling noises and a despairing “Whatever’s the matter with it?” warned him that my mother was trying to get in.

The entrance of my mother (sometimes considerably delayed) lent fresh impetus to the campaign, for she would either pooh-pooh the draft and, by settling down contentedly with her knitting, drive my father into a perfect frenzy of shivering and improvisation, or she would carry out a series of tests with a minute lace handkerchief and finally announce that in *her* opinion it was coming from the French windows — whereupon he would disappear for long periods together behind the velvet curtains, taking the *Times* with him and endeavoring, with tremendous rustlings and cracklings, to thrust that resilient paper into the cracks. Once, I remember, he forced such a quantity of newsprint into the interstices between the two flimsy glass doors that their fastening gave way and he was precipitated into the night — returning a little later to announce, in high good humor, that it was quite mild outside. This, I think he felt, in some way proved that my mother’s diagnosis had been wrong.

But in the end there was peace. My father would sit at ease, perhaps with a rug round his feet, gently swinging his glasses and gazing into the fire: full of that deep contentment, the sense of physical and mental well-being that comes to men — Alpine climbers know it well — who by the exercise of their own skill and strength and will power have reached the haven where they would be.

The modern dweller in a draft-proof apartment knows nothing of such happiness as this. He sits down and at once is comfortable. He has done nothing to achieve that status; there is no glory in it. Worse, his mind is unoccupied, a chamber swept and open into which all the chilling terrors of the outside world will presently steal. You will see him lean back and close his eyes; soon a frown creases his brows and he begins to twitch and fidget; he has started to worry about taxes or the price of meat. These are far more troublesome worries than the keenest draft, because there is nothing you can do about them. You cannot unfold an Oriental screen between yourself and the price of meat. You can only go on worrying. Whereas the man with a wholesome draft — well, no man with a current of cold air playing round his ankles cares two brass farthings for the price of anything.

It must not be thought that I am championing

the cause of drafts entirely at second hand — that, sitting in some draft-free room, I calmly base a thesis of this magnitude on the experiences of an earlier generation. My own house, certainly, lacks the regular dynamic air flow of that old Victorian house. But it does its best for me. And in some ways I can claim to be closer akin to paleolithic man even than my father was. My furniture is a great deal more simple and cavelike than his; I have nothing like the rich variety of defensive apparatus with which he was accustomed to barricade himself in. Fashion — or at any rate the fashion that was in force when I assembled my furniture — has decreed that I should have no Oriental screen, no velvet curtains, not so much as a single woolly mat. My chair is built so low that, in the normal sitting position, the whole superstructure of the sitter from the waist up is exposed to all the winds that blow; only by lying flat on the shoulder blades with the full length of the legs extended beyond the edge of the chair (and no one, unless posing for an advertisement, cares to adopt that posture for long) can the head and upper part of the trunk be brought into comparative shelter. Thus, in common with prehistoric man, I have little or no hope of baffling the draft at the receiving end; I must go out and try to block it at the source.

A fascinating thing about drafts is their versatility. To spend one’s evenings tracing cold currents of air to and fro about the house is to be constantly intrigued and delighted by their ability to change direction, to come and go, to hide in cupboards as you approach and swoop out after you when you have passed. One has to beware of the pitfalls of the Pathetic Fallacy, but sometimes, when I am on my knees in the kitchen holding a wetted finger to the hinges of the scullery door, I half believe that the draft is entering into the spirit of the game and enjoying it as much as I am — perhaps more. There is no limit to the ingenuity of the drafts in this house. I traced one of them, a beauty, to the empty fireplace in the dining room not long ago. There was no doubt about it. The downdraft was strong enough to stir the locks at my temples and even, as my wife pointed out later, to deposit a fine spray of soot on my upturned face. Yet the moment I started to stuff newspaper into the flue, the familiar icy fingers began to play around the back of my neck, and next instant the paper was whisked up the chimney with such violence that even the opening of both dining- and sitting-room doors failed to get it down again. Over and over again I have noticed this ability of drafts to reverse themselves in the twinkling of an eye; indeed I have known them to overreach themselves and change direction so abruptly as to come in half in the middle — blowing outwards, as it were, from a central vortex.

It is problems of this sort that call out the very best in a householder, and keep him happily engaged during the long winter evenings.



"Pondering the degree to which accident could overturn the schemes of wise men, Prince Bismarck once concluded that there was a special providence for drunkards, fools, and the United States. Indeed there is much to be said for the argument that America has survived and grown strong by a miraculous streak of luck that, at one turning point after another, has directed fortune its way." So writes OSCAR HANDLIN, Professor of History at Harvard and author of The Uprooted, which won the Pulitzer Prize for History in 1951. This is the third of a series of five articles, each focused on a major event in American history.

EXPLOSION ON THE "PRINCETON"

Chance or Destiny?

by OSCAR HANDLIN

1

THE chill of early morning had not yet left the air when the man-of-war *Princeton* moved down the Potomac on February 28, 1844. She was the pride of the American Navy, a steamer fitted with an Ericsson propeller. Launched scarcely six months earlier, she had already demonstrated her speed by outracing the famous British liner of steam and sail, the *Great Western*. On this day her commander, Captain Stockton, was to make another display of her power.

Aboard were several distinguished passengers. President Tyler and his most important military and naval advisers, along with a select group of politicians, had come to observe a trial of the *Princeton's* new gun, the "Peacemaker," an immense 12-inch piece, fully 16 feet long, capable of throwing a 225-pound ball. With the President was his Secretary of State, Abel P. Upshur, a Virginian recently elevated to the post. He had a particular interest in the trip, for as the former Secretary of the Navy he had watched the development of this new piece of ordnance.

The pleasant cruise proceeded some distance below Fort Washington, and on the way the *Princeton* fired several bursts to the satisfaction of all. The ladies took a "sumptuous repast" in the captain's cabin, and then it was the turn of the gentlemen at the table. Bottles were passed and a goodly number of toasts were drunk. The President was in genial humor, and noticeably attentive to pretty Julia Gardiner. Thirty years his junior, she was soon to be his bride.

As dusk descended, several of the distinguished guests drifted back to the deck, where they stood in little groups, relaxed in easy conversation, watching the shore slip by.

Those in the cabin were surprised to hear another gun go off; the dull explosion seemed prolonged. There was a moment of silence; then could be heard screams of men in agony and the sound of running feet overhead. The visitors hastened to the deck, where they were alarmed to see the ship's surgeon desperately working over a group of bodies, one of them covered with a flag. The "Peacemaker" had exploded; several bystanders had been killed, and among them was Secretary of State Upshur.

Upshur had been well liked; he was capable, a man of few enemies; and the ship's company were left in horrified silence. With the mourning at the personal loss, there were other more general forebodings. Who would now carry forward the momentous negotiations in which the Secretary of State had been engaged? How would the incident affect the presidential election, less than a year away? How would it influence the delicate balance of power that held the contending sections of the nation together?

When Upshur had left his desk, he had been preoccupied with the affairs of Texas. His successor would inherit a sadly tangled web of problems involving American relationships with that young republic.

Remote from the centers of government, with all boundaries and jurisdictions vague and undefined, Texas had for decades been a magnet for all sorts of trading and filibustering expeditions.

Twice in the twenty years after 1800, Americans had been involved in abortive revolutions along the long, indented coast of the Gulf of Mexico. In 1812 Augustus Magee and Bernardo Gutiérrez had led a small, foolhardy force to total extermination by the Spaniards. In 1821 Mexico gained its own

independence, and again filibusterers tried their luck. Out of Mississippi came James Long, leader of a spirited band of frontiersmen determined to make Texas their West, and not above summoning Jean Lafitte, the pirate, to their aid to do so. At Nacogdoches they proclaimed a republic and rode daringly into the interior to make good their pretensions. Long, too, met defeat and death at the hands of the Mexicans.

Meanwhile the United States had renounced its own vague claims to the territory. That, with the failure of the successive uprisings, put the whole region safely in the hands of the new Mexican Republic.

Acceptance of these political conditions did not, however, hold back the American settlers. Sharp-eyed men, toughened by the wilderness, self-reliant through experience, and accustomed to making their interests one with their rights, were turning the possibilities over in their minds. They believed that Texas was theirs for the bidding.

One of these was Moses Austin. A Yankee trader from Connecticut, he had come south to Richmond after the Revolution; but the little town did not offer him the opportunity he sought. The West, unrevealed, seemed full of promise, the more attractive to Austin as his disappointments made him dissatisfied with his petty trader's life. In 1798 he was off to Missouri, then still Spanish, and there, for nearly two decades, he drifted in and out of one unsuccessful enterprise after another. By then his time was running out. As his sixtieth birthday drew near, his heart sank with the realization that he might after all wind up a failure. Only in the empty spaces of the farther West, in Texas, was there one more chance of a happy ending to a long career of aimless striving. His determination fastened on that hope.

In 1820 he hastened to Bexar (San Antonio), carrying a grandiose scheme for a colony on which he promised to plant three hundred families. Perhaps the intensity of his longing lent conviction to his plea. Or perhaps his plan was in accord with the ambitions of the local officials, among whom he found an old friend. In any case, Austin carried back to Missouri with him the promise of the cherished land grant. He died almost at once on his return, worn out by his efforts. But the prize, long elusive, was his.

The burden of carrying forward the project fell to his son, Stephen F. Austin. The young man was cut from an altogether different cloth. Born in Virginia, Stephen Austin had had an uneasy bringing up on the southern frontier. He had followed his father's wanderings to the Southwest, and was no stranger to the plains. He was not a handsome man, but his high forehead and deep eyes gave him an air of earnestness and integrity. Everywhere, his patience and tact and a kind of relaxed ability to get on with any man stood him in good stead. He was only twenty-seven when Moses died, but he had

already been active in territorial politics and had served a term as circuit judge in Arkansas.

In 1821 Stephen Austin fitted out and led to the banks of the Brazos a company who became the first permanent settlers in Texas from the United States. What was more, with infinite tolerance for the inclination of Mexican officials toward procrastination, he secured confirmation of the grants in return for the agreement to people them and so opened the way to further concessions for other Americans.

2

IN THE next few years a little enclave of *norteamericanos* established itself in the province. In the region between the Sabine and Nueces rivers, the government of Mexico handed over to the newcomers a succession of grants, each as much as eleven square leagues in size. The *empresarios* who took possession agreed to establish one hundred families on the land; and although they were far from meeting this obligation, a stream of settlers moved into the area. By 1830 Texas could boast of a total population of perhaps 20,000, almost all migrants from the United States.

From the start there was trouble. The rude, self-confident frontiersmen clashed all too often with officials accustomed to the more leisurely ways of an easier society. Control of the state of Coahuila-Texas was in the hands of officials appointed from Mexico City. But the Americans had their own organ of local government in the *ayuntamiento*. The newcomers were not accustomed to give much regard to the punctilios of law, and consequently ran frequently afoul of the elaborate Mexican codes. The *empresarios* were bound by obligations to the government of Mexico; the farmers they induced to migrate had no such responsibilities. Some of the settlers, coming out of the South, had brought Negro slaves with them, hoping to establish cotton culture on the fertile soil. Others aspired to import slaves and to create a plantation system. True, a Mexican law of 1824 forbade the importation of slaves, but the rising demand offered a convincing reason for forgetting a law that no one enforced.

Nor were the *empresarios* and the other settlers more likely to heed the letter of Mexican law with regard to religion. They were Protestants, but by their coming had tacitly agreed to take on the established religion of the country. Yet none of them took the obligation seriously.

On these and other scores there were clashes now and then between the new settlers and the government, the bitterness of which was tempered only by the fact that the center of authority was remote; the federal government was itself insecure and unwilling to bring issues to a head.

Nevertheless, the crisis was not long postponed. In 1826 a hotheaded *empresario*, Haden Edwards, rose in rebellion and proclaimed the Fredonian Re-

public. Edwards was not one of Austin's followers. A firebrand, he was not a man to command the confidence of his fellows; he failed to gain support and, yielding to a repressive expedition from Mexico City, fled to Louisiana.

The uprising, vain though it was, frightened the Mexican administration. The specter of Yankee conquest haunted the timorous rulers of the republic. The *empresarios* were growing steadily in numbers; and who could tell but that they were plotting with the government of the United States to secure the transfer of the province? Confirmation of these fears could indeed be found in events across the border. A newspaper campaign by expansionists in the United States openly announced the necessity for acquiring Texas; and President Jackson in 1829 actually explored the possibility of purchasing the province.

Gloomily surveying the prospect, on the scene, was an emissary from Mexico City, General Manuel de Mier y Teran, commandant general of the eastern provinces of Mexico and responsible for the defense of Texas. Mier y Teran, now middle-aged, was a man of scientific interests who had been drawn into the Mexican revolution by patriotic fervor. He was determined to maintain the integrity of his country. This courtly man, who loved order and decent regard for form, looked somberly upon the strange mixture of people pouring across the border. He resented the lack of respect for government and the violation of law that he found everywhere, and he was impatient with religious laxity. Above all, he feared "the most avid nation in the world" to the north. That power, he warned, "by silent means," without "armies, battles, or invasions," had already laid hands on a great part of the continent. It threatened now to encroach upon Mexican soil, and the *empresarios*, who were its vanguard, had to be restrained in the interests of national security. Upon his recommendation, the Mexican Congress in 1830 forbade further colonization by citizens of the United States. At the same time, it encouraged Mexicans and Europeans to move in and it provided for the area's military defense.

Smoldering dissatisfaction broke out in a local revolt in Galveston in 1832. A minor skirmish deposed the commander of the garrison but left the immediate region in a state of revolt.

3

AT THIS point, the cause of Texas became bound up with the career of Antonio López de Santa Anna. Almost forty at the time, Santa Anna had already had a tempestuous career. He had abandoned the business into which his family had put him and had taken up the profession of arms. In the struggle for Mexican independence, he had first been a royalist. Then he had turned against his Spanish masters and

had advanced in power under the new government. He was vain and without sense of humanity; his romantic ambition had no limits. He was able when he wished to be, but he was often incapable of disciplining his abilities. At the time of the Galveston revolt he made a contested election the pretext for mutiny, and he encouraged the Americans around Galveston in their rebellion.

Santa Anna was not a theorist; he grasped at whatever chance seemed likely to add to his power. Aspiring to the presidency, he discovered a useful slogan in states' rights. His vague statements about decentralization encouraged the Texans to believe that under his administration they could attain some sort of autonomous position within the Mexican Republic.

Santa Anna no sooner gained power — the Mexican Congress recognized him as President in 1833 — than he forgot even the shadowy promises he had earlier made. Instead he introduced a series of measures against the American settlers more restrictive than those of his predecessors. Once at the center of affairs, Santa Anna was hardly the man to let authority slip out of his hands. In 1835 he was responsible for the enactment of a law that centralized the administration of the whole country and crushed the vestiges of states' rights. The hopes of the Texans for autonomy as a Mexican state died that year.

They now sought self-government outside the Mexican Republic. For several years groups of Texans had been meeting in conventions to petition for redress of their grievances and the reform of their government. Stephen F. Austin and the *empresarios* had exercised a moderating influence in these gatherings. Become conservative as they had become wealthy, they were conscious of their debt to Mexico and anxious for an accommodation that would keep the country intact and yet meet the pressing demands of the other Americans in Texas.

Santa Anna's repression of federalism was the last straw. A "consultation" or convention had already been scheduled to meet at New Washington on the Brazos in October, 1835. When it assembled, its members determined to take up arms in resistance. Yet even here the conservatism of Austin made itself felt. Fearful lest the convention move "too fast and too far," he persuaded that body to adopt as its aim the restoration of constitutional government within the Mexican Republic.

Alas, Santa Anna's callousness put to naught all the results of Austin's tact. The "consultation" had created a provisional state government and had adjourned to meet again in March, 1836. Before that date arrived, news came of the battle at the Alamo.

In the little mission in San Antonio, 188 Americans under W. B. Travis had been hemmed in by an army of 5000. The men who stood siege had come a long way to this little outpost up the river. They

had come in their faith that this West was American and would be their home. At whatever cost, they were determined to cling to that faith. And that involved resistance, without compromise, to any infringement of their rights as free men. They had no illusions as they issued a defiant call for help to "all Americans in the world"; above the cathedral they could see the black flag of No Quarter. But they would not yield, though they knew they were cut off from every hope of aid.

For a few days they held off the attackers. Then, exhausted, their supplies gone, they still did not surrender. As Santa Anna's army swarmed over the walls to the sound of the *degüello* (the beheading call), they fought on in hand-to-hand conflict, and died in silent fury. No quarter was asked or given; three women, two children, and a Negro servant survived.

After the Alamo, even Austin recognized that no further connection with Mexico was tolerable; independence for Texas was the only possible course. The provisional government proclaimed itself a sovereign state and prepared to fight to make the proclamation successful. Santa Anna had every intention of snuffing out this uprising. It would take courage, energy, and skill to resist.

Responsibility for guiding the Texans through this crisis fell to an aging comrade-in-arms of Andrew Jackson. Sam Houston had been born in Virginia of the same Scotch-Irish stock as "Old Hickory." He too had served in the War of 1812, and like Jackson had moved into Tennessee politics. A striking figure, six feet two in height, Houston had become adept as a stump speaker and had made himself Congressman and Governor. When he married Eliza Allen, a woman of wealth, grace, and social position, he had been well on the way to establishing himself in the new Southern aristocracy. But he could not accommodate himself to his wife. She left him, and Houston at once sensed a bitter discontent with everything he had become. By the divorce he lost his home, his status, and his place in politics. He turned to the West and sought refuge in the Indian country, among the nomadic tribesmen of the plains. In a gesture of rejection he took a new wife from among the Indians and was himself adopted by the Cherokees. In the next few years he led a dissolute life, trading in a small way, carousing with his Tiana, existing without ambition or purpose.

In 1833 Houston had had some contacts with the Texans, who had been impressed with his military reputation. Their admiration stirred the embers of his self-respect, of the desire for fame. When the crisis deepened, the new republic called upon him to be its commander in chief. Slowly, rekindled ambitions induced him to heed the summons; and it was he who led the way to Texan independence.

By the best standards of military science, Houston was not much of a general. His strategy was

simple: to wait, like the Indians, for the opportunity for ambush or surprise and then to strike in one merciless blow that would avenge the martyrs of the Alamo and repel the immediate threat to Texas. Something less than a thousand men had gathered under his standard, rough and untrained, but imbued with a fierce desire to destroy the invader. With this army Houston drew back into the interior, knowing the Mexicans would not hasten to follow.

President Santa Anna himself was in command of the federal Mexican troops. Victory at the Alamo had bolstered his confidence. He had no great respect for the fighting power of the *Yanquis*; so he moved in leisurely pursuit, dividing his attentions between a beautiful young mistress he had acquired en route and desultory plundering of the homes of terrorized settlers.

In mid-April, Houston struck without warning. Forced marches, in little more than two days, brought his army back the fifty-five miles to New Washington. There Santa Anna was encamped without a suspicion that the Texans were anywhere within reach, without even sentries on guard. A sudden attack threw the President into a panicky withdrawal that left him the next afternoon trapped in the swamps of the San Jacinto River. Houston then hit the Mexicans at the siesta hour, while Santa Anna was asleep. When the battle ended, six Texans and more than six hundred Mexicans were dead, and the President himself was Houston's prisoner. The independence of Texas was assured. After a brief captivity, Santa Anna, who valued his own skin above all, was released on condition that he withdraw Mexican troops from the new republic.

4

FOR the United States, Texan independence posed an embarrassing problem. Jackson had earlier wished this area to be part of the Union. But he had hesitated, unwilling to antagonize Mexico and conscious that new territory might disturb the delicate balance of sections in the United States. He and Van Buren, his successor, thought it wise, for the time being, simply to recognize Texan independence and to proceed slowly to eventual annexation.

Caution became still more necessary in 1840 when the Whig Party came to power. Daniel Webster, who played a leading role in the new administration, had earlier opposed annexation; influential groups in the North feared, with him, that new Southern states might weaken New England's power in Congress. Moreover, the United States was then negotiating with Great Britain the ticklish disputes over the northern boundaries of Oregon and Maine. Any precipitate step toward annexation might antagonize London.

Britain too had long been interested in the territory. For two decades English statesmen had been

encouraging the Latin-American states in their struggle for freedom. In their view, Texas was similarly to be sustained. Furthermore Texas, they hoped, might be the field for an interesting experiment. English factories consumed cotton in large and growing quantities. Yet it was galling to be dependent for that staple on the slave-tilled fields of the South. The abolition of slavery in the British West Indies a few years earlier had demonstrated that other tropical crops could be raised with free labor. Might not Texas be the occasion for a similar trial with cotton?

Houston, for one, was not bound by any particular attachment to the United States, and was quite willing to turn to England for support. Although the majority of Texans probably leaned toward the Union, they were not willing to wait indefinitely. They might accept as an alternative an understanding by which Great Britain would recognize the republic, as France already had in 1839. Britain might guarantee the independence of Texas and, by loan or subsidy, enable it to free its slaves and establish itself on a firm financial basis.

So, at least, ran the fears of President Tyler. Tyler, too, was a Virginian. His long record as a states' rights Democrat had not prevented him from entering into a temporary alliance with the Whigs in the election of 1840. As a candidate for the vice-presidency he had been expected to cut into Democratic votes and to be amply rewarded by the tenure of a dignified but innocuous position. The death of President Harrison shortly after the inauguration had altered the situation. Tyler became chief executive, and he unexpectedly displayed both an unwillingness to act the figurehead and the desire to run again in 1844. For three years he battled factions of both parties, antagonizing many members of the Senate and House and governing by a *de facto* coalition of his own supporters.

As the presidential year 1844 approached, Tyler attempted to reassess his own position. The Whigs were decisively alienated. He could aspire to a second term only with Democratic support. But since the party leaders were hostile, he could attract that support only by identifying himself with some popular issue. There, in his mind, lay the significance of Texas. On that question he could draw upon the deep wells of expansionist sentiment throughout the country — enough to carry him once more to the White House. The Webster-Ashburton Treaty had settled the outstanding disputes with Great Britain. Relieved of those burdens, Tyler felt free to pursue the Texan negotiations. He broke with Webster, whom he had kept in office to conclude the English negotiations, and appointed the Virginian Upshur as Secretary of State in place of the godlike Daniel.

From Tyler's point of view the diplomatic key to the negotiations was the assurance to the Texans that the United States would protect them in the

event that Mexico should resume the attack. It was equally important that annexation be consummated without stirring up the slavery controversy. Were the question to become one of slavery against freedom, the two-thirds majority necessary to ratify a treaty in the Senate could not be secured. The occupation, independence, and annexation of Texas, therefore, had to be treated as what it had in fact been: a stage in the process of expansion, unrelated to slavery.

In the desire to put the matter in terms of manifest destiny, Tyler had the coöperation of responsible statesmen of both parties. Clay and Van Buren, the presumptive Whig and Democratic candidates, issued statements that were intended to soothe potential fears. And Upshur, as Secretary of State, was carrying out discreet, secret negotiations to complete the diplomatic arrangements without heated public debate. Had Upshur lived to carry through the plans, Texas might have come into the Union without the blaze of controversy that actually followed its admission.

5

THE explosion aboard the *Princeton* vacated the office of Secretary of State and placed in new hands the conclusion of the dealings with Texas. In the choice of a successor to Upshur, Tyler confronted a difficult decision. The political crisis and the approaching election narrowly restricted the range of possible candidates. Since Tyler had broken with both parties, he could not approach any of the recognized party leaders. Nor were any of them likely to accept office in a dying administration without popular or congressional support. Only a man equally isolated would throw in his lot with the President. That man was John C. Calhoun.

Calhoun was now approaching the inglorious twilight of his career. At sixty-two he had lost every important battle and alienated every colleague. As he sat in Washington, cut off from his family, his anxious thoughts would drift back to the wife whom he loved, yet who punished him with frenetic fits of "nerves" for his absorption in a career she jealously hated. Every position short of the nation's highest office he had already held — in South Carolina, in the Senate, in the cabinet, as well as the vice-presidency. And his ambitions for the presidency he had surrendered.

Now he looked bitterly at a country he had helped to make but which he no longer recognized. Thirty years earlier, he too had seen the vision of a great nation, free and expansive. In the intervening decades, however, he had made too many wrong choices. In the last years of his life, Calhoun devoted his best energies to the justification of his lost causes. His superb brain had twisted its way through many disputes; he could now turn it to support any argument. As his horizons crowded in

upon him, Calhoun fixed his attention ever more on the defense of his own state and his own section, knowing in his inner heart they were doomed with all else that he cherished. "The South! The poor South!" he was to murmur as he died. Yet he was forever wiping away his sense of guilt about his desertion of the national ideals that had so moved him in his young manhood.

Always he came back to slavery. It was that institution that had driven a wedge between the North and the South, that had deprived him of the presidency. Slavery had led the South away from the path the North had taken, away from the visions Calhoun once had glimpsed. But this cast-iron man was incapable of admitting error in himself or seeing tragedy in the history of his section. Slavery could not have been wrong; slavery was necessary — indeed, beneficent; indeed, a good and proper institution. South Carolina had come the right way, while the rest of the world was steeped in error.

For Calhoun, Texas was of transcendent importance. It was the occasion to demonstrate that slavery was not a dying, anachronistic vestige of the past, but rather a living, creative, expansive institution, not doomed to retreat but to spread. It was more than time to shift away from the defensive stand conservative Southern politicians had taken, and to assume the aggressive posture worthy of the civilization the South defended.

Calhoun's first thoughts as Secretary of State were of Texas. The proposed treaty was in good shape, with all the essential points agreed upon in earlier conversations with the Texan commissioner. But before him was a note from Lord Ashburton, the British Foreign Secretary, commenting on his government's interest in Texas. The document closed with assurances that England had no intention of interfering in American domestic affairs, but added a conventional statement of interest in the extension of freedom throughout the world.

Calhoun deliberately made this statement the occasion for a tart retort to dramatize the issue as he saw it. He went far beyond the immediate necessity of the argument to a general, abstract defense of slavery as a positive good. Widely circulated, his answer brought into the open the controversy that every other American statesman had tried to repress.

The immediate results were confusing. Northerners who might have voted to join Texas to the Union could not now assent to the addition of another slave state; the treaty was defeated in the Senate.

Texas figured prominently in the election of 1844. Tyler was passed over in the choice of candidates. Van Buren, for his antislavery predilections, was rejected by the Democratic Party; and Clay, wavering between North and South, could not take a position strong enough to appeal to either section. The victory went to J. K. Polk, an expansionist

who had made clear his Southern, proslavery sympathies. And the election was no sooner over than annexation was consummated through a joint resolution of Congress that brought Texas in — a slave state.

What followed was almost anticlimactic. The Mexicans recognized neither the independence of Texas nor its annexation by the United States. But their stubborn pride was tempered by caution. By now Texas was no longer the issue. Further west toward the Pacific lay what is now California and New Mexico, and some Americans were already considering the acquisition of all Mexico. Santa Anna was not eager for battle. But a feint at the border in 1846 provoked him into fighting; and when the short war reached its conclusion, the United States stretched in an unbroken mass westward across the continent. The expansive forces that had led people across the Ohio, then beyond the Mississippi into Louisiana, and then onward into Texas, had fulfilled their manifest destiny.

It was now no longer a question of territorial expansion, however. At the turning point in 1844, when the new Secretary of State had taken Upshur's place, the problem of slavery inherited from the nation's past had come to absorb all men's attention. Calhoun's intervention had united inextricably the future of slavery and of westward expansion. Thereafter there could be no evading the question. In any further additions of territory, would slavery march with the American flag or not? Moderate opinion in the North now began to wonder whether the abolitionist bands were not after all right to attack the slaveholders' "conspiracy."

In Pennsylvania young David Wilmot, a Democratic Congressman, pondered the question and decided that there could, in conscience, be no answer but the negative. When the question of the disposition of the territories acquired from Mexico came before the House of Representatives in 1848, Wilmot introduced a proviso declaring the new lands forever free. The Compromise of 1850 did not close the debate thus started, nor did the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854. Rather it dragged on through the bloody battlefields of Kansas and was protracted in the convention halls in which the Southern states, in 1861, enacted their ordinances of secession. As it developed, the existing political parties collapsed and a tragic cleavage opened between the two sections of the nation.

At long last there would come a spring day in Charleston Harbor when the Carolina gentry would come down to watch the guns booming across the bay at the little island over which the Union flag still waved. The shells that fell around Fort Sumter in 1861 had long before been touched off by the failure of the "Peacemaker" on the *Princeton*. For it was then that the issue had been drawn, whether the future of the country would be one of growing freedom or of spreading slavery.



Books and Men



CHARLES J. ROLO, who writes
"Reader's Choice" in the *Atlantic*

Bookshelf each month, is the author of two war books and the editor of the collected works of Aldous Huxley. A gifted essayist, he has written for us in times past on André Gide, Aldous Huxley, and Thomas Mann. His article on Evelyn Waugh in the November *Atlantic* started a new series; now he gives us his appraisal of an Italian novelist who has acquired an enormous following in this country.

ALBERTO MORAVIA

by CHARLES J. ROLO

I

IN ITALY more than in any other Western country, the contemporary writer has had to pass through a searching re-examination of the cultural tradition he inherited. Not joined into a nation until 1870, a latecomer to the industrial revolution, deficient in important natural resources, and burdened with a feudal class system, Italy has been ill-equipped to cope with the challenges of the modern age: for nine tenths of its population the cardinal realities have been poverty and lack of opportunity. The most important Italian writing from 1860 to 1900 — the work of Verga, for example — honestly reflected the harrowing facts of Italian experience. But under the baneful influence of D'Annunzio, and more so under the pressures of Fascism, Italian writing (with a few notable exceptions such as Svevo and Pirandello) tended to degenerate into an escape mechanism. Its progressive divorce from reality took two main lines. One was the heroic principle celebrated in the bombast of D'Annunzio. The other was a tearful, cuddly middle-class sentimentality, which idealized Italian family life and preached the virtue of submission to the status quo. The mythology of the Fascist era liked to picture Italian life as sturdily founded on "*potenza e pasta asciutta* — might and macaroni." The might was a disastrous illusion, and millions were short of macaroni.

It is from this perspective that one must approach the best contemporary Italian writing, and in particular the work of Alberto Moravia. In contrast to the prevailing trend in post-war Italian fiction, Moravia does not directly engage in social criticism. "The novel," he said, "has no other goal than the description of a particular individual and the illustration of a particular conception of life." But the harshness of Moravia's vision of life represents, at least in part, a savage reaction against the bombastic and consolatory falsehoods which permeated Italian culture when Moravia came of age in the late nineteen-twenties.

In the past five years, Alberto Moravia has established himself as an international literary figure of the first rank. When *Time* magazine referred to him as "one of the best writers in the world today," it was voicing an opinion shared by a number of critics on both sides of the Atlantic. Moravia's work has had a wide international appeal. His books have been translated into some twenty languages; and in the United States, his total sales have greatly exceeded those of any other Italian novelist, living or dead.

In Moravia's fiction there is an unusual fusion of the somber modern temper with an old-fashioned respect for storytelling. His long novels — *Wheel of Fortune*, *The Woman of Rome*, *The Conformist* — are strongly charged with action; and even when Moravia is anatomizing a neurosis and describing every shift in its pulse, as in the novelette *Luca*, he is careful to sustain narrative interest: there is suspense in his psychology. His artistry reaches its peak in the short novel; in the longer novels, the plotting, especially in the later stages, is sometimes contrived or crudely melodramatic. Moravia is also a masterly writer of short stories. So far his seven volumes of stories have remained unpublished in English, but eight tales selected from them will be brought out in book form later this year.

At his best, Moravia is a superlative craftsman. He admires classical tragedy above all other literary forms, and one finds its tautness and its elegance of design in his work. His prose — firm, in the main humorless, but strong on clarity and precision — has the beauty of writing which expresses unerringly what its author wishes to express. His milieu is for the most part Italian bourgeois society; and he has documented it sharply and solidly without indulging in the naturalistic writer's plodding accumulation of detail. In quick, easy strokes he conjures up the leisurely and monotonous rhythm of the long summer vacation at the sea-

side; the inert atmosphere that hovers over the dining table as the family is consuming its copious midday meal; the furnishings, banal but "of good quality"; the small talk, the entrenched habits, and the conventional values.

But where Moravia excels above all is in the depth and subtlety of his psychological insight; in his ability to disclose the hidden vagaries of human nature without flattening his characters into case histories. Few writers have displayed such mastery in treating the crises of adolescence; and there is possibly no one else today who handles the domain of sexual experience with Moravia's acuteness and matter-of-fact exactitude.

2

ALBERTO MORAVIA was born in Rome in 1907, the son of a moderately wealthy Venetian architect. Stricken by tuberculosis of the bone at the age of nine, he spent five of the next eight years in bed, the last two in a sanatorium in the Dolomites. The disease was not fully conquered until Moravia was twenty-five, and it has left him with a slight limp.

Unable to go to school, he was educated by a succession of governesses and he became an avid reader. When he started on his first novel at seventeen, the writers he admired most were Boccaccio, Manzoni, Dostoevski, and Joyce. "Joyce," he said in a recent letter, "may have suggested to me the time structure of *Gli Indifferenti* [*The Time of Indifference*], which covers two days in the life of a single family. Dostoevski may have stimulated my tendency toward psychological and moral introspection. Possibly Manzoni gave me a predilection for simple and lurid writing. And possibly it was from Boccaccio that I acquired my taste for plot and intrigue."

Gli Indifferenti was completed before Moravia was twenty, but no publisher would accept it until the author had agreed to pay for the first printing. The book was a sensational success: at twenty-two Moravia found himself famous — and in official quarters infamous. Although *Gli Indifferenti* contained no reference whatsoever to politics, its acrid picture of the Italian bourgeoisie was in flagrant contradiction to Fascist mythology. The novel focuses on the disintegration of a Roman family in the late nineteen-twenties. The lives of its protagonists are rotted by false emotionalism, inertia, and illusory hopes; and the implicit theme is that there is no escape from this condition in the time in which they live. With its deft construction and its assured, merciless characterization, this furiously disillusioned book is an amazing accomplishment on the part of an author not yet twenty.

When Moravia's second novel, *Le Ambizioni Sbagliate* (*Wheel of Fortune*) was published in Italy in 1935, the censors issued a directive that it was not to be reviewed. Now out of print in this

country, *Wheel of Fortune* revolves around the passions and intrigues of two Roman families of the upper and middle class. The Italian title, *The Mistaken Ambitions*, perfectly sums up the theme.

Finding the political atmosphere in Italy suffocating, Moravia traveled a great deal during the thirties writing nonpolitical reportage for Italian newspapers. Most of 1935 he spent in the United States and in Mexico, which suggested the backdrop of his next novel, *La Mascherata* (*The Fancy Dress Party*). This is Moravia's only humorous book — an unusual blend of *opéra bouffe* and psychological realism. Set in a mythical country in which a certain General Arango has emerged as dictator, it has two interlocking plots, the one having to do with the farcically atrocious ways of secret police, the other with the atrociously farcical ways of love. As political satire the book gets nowhere in particular, but it is a caustic *divertissement* in which a keen eye and a shrewd hand are at work.

The novel's reference to Mussolini's love life was so transparent that each of the underlings in the censorship department felt he had better hand the book on to his superior; and eventually it reached the Minister of Popular Culture, who handed it to Mussolini. The Duce ordered that the novel be published. A month later, it was ordered withdrawn. Moravia was then forbidden to write in the press under his own name and he adopted the pseudonym of Pseudo. A year later, Pseudo was silenced.

During the forty-five-day Badoglio interregnum which followed the fall of Fascism, Moravia became involved in anti-Fascist journalism; and when the Germans occupied Rome, he learned that the SS intended to arrest him. He and his wife, whom he had married in 1941, fled to the battle front in the Cassino area, expecting that within a few weeks they would fall into the hands of the Allies. The weeks lengthened into eight months, during which the Moravias lived like savages in a mud hut 3000 feet up in the mountains.

Since his liberation by the American Fifth Army in May, 1943, Moravia has been extraordinarily productive. He has published eight books in Italy, bringing his total up to fifteen. He has written the script for the film version of two of his books, one of them *The Woman of Rome*, whose heroine is portrayed by Gina Lollobrigida. He has had a play produced in Milan and has recently completed another drama. In addition, he has turned out a great deal of journalism and has acted as adviser to an Italian publisher on American and British books.

Moravia writes two or three hours every morning, seven days a week, wherever he may be. "I can write," he once remarked, "in a hotel lobby or with someone playing the bull fiddle in the chair near me." In the afternoons and evenings, he

follows his fancy; he reads, walks, goes swimming when at the seaside, or sees his intimate friends. He is a firm believer in the Greek ideal of the well-rounded life — “My books are part of my life, but are not so over-proportionately, and all my strength has gone into maintaining a sense of proportion.”

I first met Moravia in 1947 in Anacapri, where he lived for four years. Just above medium height and compactly built, he is a handsome man who bears a slight resemblance to Sir Laurence Olivier. His dark hair is graying at the temples, and there is a suggestion of severity in his square-cut, strongly modeled face, with its long thin-lipped mouth and deep-set eyes. Though essentially shy, Moravia emerges fairly readily from his shell, and he is an extremely stimulating talker. The predominant impression is of immense intelligence and controlled restlessness; of a man — to quote his friend, Robert Penn Warren — “strangely poised between the inward and the outward worlds, [whose vigor] turns inward in brooding and self-absorption, outward in curiosity, argument, joke and abrupt gesture.”

3

AFTER *The Fancy Dress Party*, Moravia wrote two novelettes which were published in the United States in a single volume entitled *Two Adolescents: The Stories of Agostino and Luca*. In contrast to so many American and British novels of adolescence, which bog down in autobiographical self-pity and nostalgia for the lost paradise of childhood, these stories are told with the clear-eyed detachment of a mature adult and with an unobtrusive but telling compassion. The anguish of the youthful protagonists is revealed in all its pathos, but without the slightest trace of mawkishness.

Set against an exquisitely evocative background of summer sunshine and sea, *Agostino* chronicles — with an extraordinary delicacy of perception — a sheltered thirteen-year-old's loss of innocence and the inner dramas that ensue. It is a small masterpiece which to my mind ranks with Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice*. *Luca* is the story of a neurotic fifteen-year-old who, after working himself up to a total breakdown, is “reborn” through his initiation into sexual experience by a warmhearted nurse. Though decidedly less attractive than *Agostino* and not so perfectly proportioned, it is no less impressive in its insight and its control of the trickiest possible subject matter.

When Moravia is asked whether a particular novel of his represents this or that, he is apt to reply a trifle belligerently: “It is just a novel.” But one afternoon, when we were talking about *The Woman of Rome*, he surprised me by saying right out that implicit in it is the story of modern Italy. He added that, in his view, the great drama of twentieth-century Italy has been a disastrous

attempt on the part of the intelligentsia to rush a backward nation into becoming an up-to-date modern state. “Don't forget,” he remarked, “that Mussolini must be considered an intellectual.”

In *The Woman of Rome*, the prostitute-heroine and narrator, Adriana, is a beautiful, courageous girl, brought up in atrocious poverty but sustained by a cheerful disposition in which there is a blend of intense sensuality, natural goodness, and hopeful longing for a decent husband and a nice home. The two men who complete her ruin are a brutal murderer, Sonzogno, who possesses her physically more deeply than any other man and leaves her bearing his child; and Mino, a neurotic intellectual with whom she falls desperately in love because his family background embodies her idea of the good life. Adriana, in the early stages of the novel, represents the primitive Italy, uncontaminated by civilization, and Sonzogno and Mino symbolize the factors that led Italy to disaster under Fascism — the appeal of force and the unfortunate role played by the intelligentsia.

As a piece of fiction, *The Woman of Rome* is easy to poke fun at, since taken literally it is literally all about whoring; and its heroine, as disaster closes in on her, indulges in philosophic musings in which *vox populi* sometimes sounds incongruously like the *vox* of Existentialism. But there is much in *The Woman of Rome* in which Moravia's special talents show up brilliantly — his narrative power; his skill in projecting the “feel” of Italian life; his mastery in the domain of Eros.

In order to appreciate Moravia one must be of the persuasion that sex is a proper subject for the novelist. Those who feel that the full-dress adulteries of Victorian fiction, or the fancy-dress amours of the historical romance, carry realism in sexual relations about as far as it should go will unquestionably find Moravia outrageously lacking in restraint. He displays in his fiction an unusually vibrant awareness of the erotic element in life; but his sexuality is spontaneous and forthright, free from any taint of calculated sensationalism. Just as Balzac's work derived substance from his preoccupation with “the truth of money,” so Moravia's work gains force and individuality from his preoccupation with “the truth of sex.”

To Moravia, as to many Italians, sex is the natural passion and pastime of mankind, and nothing pertaining to it startles or embarrasses him. I well remember his sardonic amusement over the hoopla occasioned in this country by the first Kinsey report. “An ignorant Italian peasant,” he said, “knows all these things before he is twenty.”

But there is a more specific reason, I believe, why sex occupies the center of Moravia's stage. Like Thomas Mann or the early Aldous Huxley, Moravia is a dualist deeply conscious of a conflict between “civilization” and “nature,” intellect

and instinct. Though pre-eminently an intellectual, Moravia is also a man of the Mediterranean who loves "the ocean, the mountains, strong sunlight and wine"; a man who is profoundly attracted by the Homeric age, which he sees as the "unspoiled" infancy of civilization, when civilization was still developing in accordance with and not contrary to nature. Moravia most certainly is no archaist yearning for a reversion to the past, but he feels that the highly civilized modern has suffered a damaging severance from instinctual nature, which is neither "good" nor "bad" but which cannot be violated without violating life itself. Thus if sex figures so prominently in Moravia's work, it is, I think, because it represents to him the great line of communication between the cerebral modern and elemental nature. To vary the metaphor, it appears as the prompting of Mother Earth; as a great female force which reminds man of the truth of his origins.

4

THE three novels which followed *The Woman of Rome* are further studies of the price which modern civilization exacts; and in two of them, the problem is dramatized in terms of an intellectual man married to a deeply instinctual woman. The narrator of *Conjugal Love*, Silvio Baldeschi, is a wealthy dilettante whose recent marriage has proved profoundly satisfying. Baldeschi reveres instinct as the life-giving force in love and art; his wife, Leda, wishes she had more of her husband's rationality. Baldeschi now sets about writing the masterpiece of which he believes himself capable. But his initial efforts are disappointing, and he decides that he had better abstain from love-making until the book is finished in order not to dissipate his "inspiration." In due course, he discovers that vanity has blinded him to his lack of talent, and furthermore that his hot-blooded wife has let herself be seduced by the apelike village barber.

Baldeschi succeeds in reconciling himself to his mediocrity. Conscious of his need for greater clarity, he forgives his wife and the novel ends on a hopeful note. *Conjugal Love* is one of Moravia's best books, an altogether masterly study of the relations between a man and a woman.

In *The Conformist*, the focus is on the corruption of a civilized man by the distempered modern world — the Italy of the nineteen-twenties and -thirties. Marcello Clerici's destructive impulses as a child, and a sinister experience with a homosexual whom he thinks he has killed, cause him to grow up with a harrowing sense of abnormality and guilt, from which he seeks refuge in an obsessive pursuit of normalcy. His idea of normalcy is to be "like everybody else" — to conform rigidly to his environment. But a series of shattering experiences brings home to him that the normality he

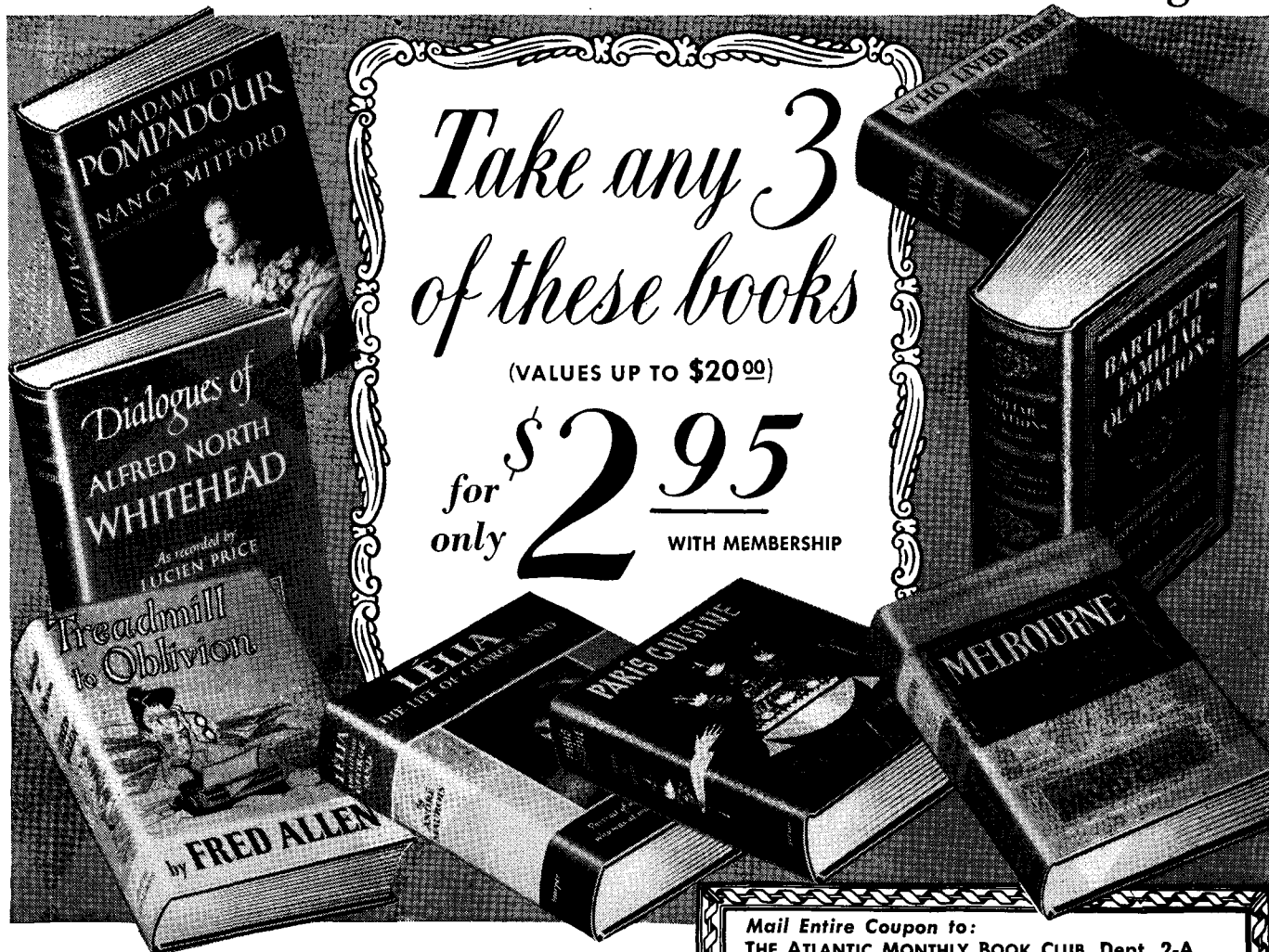
has pursued is a mirage and that his traumatic sense of guilt was unjustified, because no man can remain innocent. The story illustrates — brilliantly at first but in the end too patly — what might be called the logic of the Absurd: in his flight from anarchic impulses which, though unfortunate, were human, Clerici surrenders himself to the inhuman discipline of a dictatorship, and he is forced into the genuinely abnormal role of political spy and participant in cold-blooded assassination.

Moravia's latest novel, *A Ghost at Noon* (Farrar, Straus & Young, \$3.50), starts out with virtually the same situation as *Conjugal Love* and is a complementary treatment of the same themes. In this case the narrator, Riccardo Molteni, sacrifices his ambitions to what he believes to be his wife's needs. After two years of happy marriage, he decides to give up the very simple life they have been leading. He purchases the sort of home which his wife has always longed for; and to pay for it he abandons his efforts to write a great drama and gets a well-paid job as script-writer for a movie producer called Battista, a more sophisticated version of the barber of *Conjugal Love*. At precisely this moment Molteni notices that his wife — a rather uneducated, submissive, loving creature — has become indifferent and evasive. He eventually wrests from Emilia the admission that she no longer loves him, that in fact she despises him. She refuses, however, to tell him why; and from here on the novel — in Italian more appropriately entitled *Contempt* — becomes a fascinating *what-dunit*: a complex, suspenseful, very cleverly stage-managed drama of psychological inquiry.

Molteni has been assigned to prepare a film treatment of *The Odyssey* in collaboration with a German director, Reingold; and Battista, who has designs on Emilia, invites them all down to his villa in Capri. Battista has made it clear that what he wants is a spectacular, strictly commercial film. Reingold, a pious Freudian, is determined to reinterpret *The Odyssey* as a drama of "unconscious conjugal repugnance" between Ulysses and Penelope. And Molteni, revolted by both these approaches, wishes to be faithful to Homer: he sees *The Odyssey* as an epic of the nobility of human effort in the marvelous infancy of civilization.

But out of Reingold's analysis of the relations between Ulysses and Penelope, there comes to Molteni an understanding of why Emilia despises him and is beginning to respond to the advances of Battista, whom she originally found repugnant. The explanation does not lie in anything that Molteni has done but in the fact that he is a genuinely civilized man and Emilia is a primitive woman corrupted by the modern world. Since her introduction to Battista's world, her husband's reasonableness, his consideration for her, his lack of commercial success, have become in her eyes the mark of a contemptible weakling. Uncon-

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sciously she has come to identify honor, pride, virility, with the dictatorial attitude of the coarse tycoon, Battista. The solution, Molteni decides, is to break away from Battista and return to the simple life of their first year of marriage. But he finds that Emilia has gone off with Battista; and with a highly appropriate symbolism Battista's mania for speeding causes a mishap on the road to Rome in which Battista emerges unscathed and Emilia is killed.

A Ghost at Noon has a flaw that is characteristic of Moravia: the connections between the discussion of *The Odyssey* and the conflict of the Moltenis are so neatly worked out as to seem slightly artificial. Even so, with its forceful rendering of character, scene, and mental state, the book is an impressive example of Moravia's compact and mordant artistry.

When Moravia's first two novels were published in this country in the nineteen-thirties, they met with a decidedly discouraging reception. Then, in 1949, Farrar, Straus & Young reintroduced him to American readers with *The Woman of Rome*; and the six Moravia titles published since that time have sold — in their hard- and soft-cover editions — more than 2,000,000 copies.

The most important critical complaint about Moravia's fiction has been that, as one writer put it, he keeps cultivating "a petty Inferno from which apparently there is no exit." It has been charged that his people are heartless and helpless; that he can only write with passion about the failure of passion; in sum, that his fictional world is unrelentingly desolate and disagreeable. Now undoubtedly the fact of his being an invalid throughout his youth predisposed Moravia toward pessimism. But his pessimism ceases to be a purely negative attitude when set against the Italian literary tradition and against the realities of his environment. It represents a necessary corrective to spurious optimism, "mistaken ambitions," and consolatory cant about the nature of human existence. Moravia might well say what Gide said of himself: "To disturb — that is my role."

In Moravia's vision there is no romanticism, no ideology whatsoever, and no moral indignation. Nothing human is alien to him. When asked in an

interview why his principal male characters were almost all unsympathetic, he replied that on the contrary all — even Clerici — were in some way sympathetic. His somber estimate of the human condition has led him not to existentialist nausea but to melancholy compassion.

What the critic called Moravia's "petty Inferno" *does* have an exit. It is reached via relentless clarity and self-acceptance without complacency. To Moravia the one indisputable and reliable virtue is self-honesty. It has often been said that he is a moralist without faith in a moral order, but it would be more exact to say that he is a moralist whose theme is the danger of moral ambition. His fiction contains an unobtrusive but distinct didactic undertone, which tells us that we are never as bad as we think we are, and that we can never be as good as we think we can be — two notions which the Anglo-Saxon, imbued with moralism and meliorism, is apt to look upon as indulgent and defeatist. Moravia does not intimate that clear-eyed self-acceptance will unlock the gateway to Paradise, but simply that it enables us to make the best of Purgatory. The heroine of *The Woman of Rome* observes: "I have often wondered why misery and anger dwell in the hearts of people who try to live according to certain precepts and to conform to certain ideals, and why those people who accept their destiny — which is mainly emptiness, darkness and weakness — are so often gay and carefree."

In Moravia's Purgatory, the sun also rises and the sea brings refreshment. Its creator has a straightforward and engaging appreciation of the good material things of life — fine clothing, comfortable homes, a pastry, and a glass of vermouth. Although in Moravia the wages of fleshly love are usually unhappiness, the flesh itself remains a perennial wonder — a thing of strange, tormenting beauty. Most importantly, Moravia's fictional universe is one in which men and women are interesting and valuable purely in themselves. Whatever the issues dramatized in his work, it is always the individual that counts. "In the modern world," he once said, "everyone is trying to remake society. I have at heart, above all, the human person . . . with his name, occupation, age, face, body, arms, legs."

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BY

EDWARD
WEEKS

THERE is a propensity in us all to live vicariously in a vanished age. Across the centuries another time and place stand out in sunny relief; to have lived then we think, so kindly is our reading of history, would have been to touch greatness. Life then was more dedicated and more rewarding. Those who believe in transmigration would say that we actually did live at such times and that a part of us still responds to that ancient inheritance. Thus Flaubert writing to George Sand says, "I am not overwhelmed as you are by the feeling that life opens before us an entirely new experience. It seems to me, on the contrary, that I have always lived; and my memory goes back to the Pharaohs. I can see myself so clearly in past ages, engaged in different trades with such varied fortunes. I am the sum of those vanished personalities. I have been boatman on the Nile, *leno* in Rome during the Punic Wars, and then Greek rhetorician in Suburra, where I was eaten up by bugs. In the crusades I died of eating too many grapes on the Syrian coast. I have been pirate and monk, coachman and clown. Perhaps even Emperor of the East."

In my travels I have had the prickly sensation of having been there before, and that what I was seeing held a dim familiarity. I felt this, for instance, on my first visit to Fountains Abbey. There are times when the multiple selves in all of us reach out for other vocations. I think I should have served loyally as a monk in the monastery of St. Columba in County Meath at the time the Book of Kells was being illuminated; I might have acted with Garrick; I could have been a captain in the New Jersey Infantry, a veteran of Trenton and Yorktown the evening Washington took farewell of the officers at Fraunces Tavern. I think I should have prospered as a gambler on a Mississippi River boat, and earned my keep as a Secretary at the White House under Lincoln.

From Walter D. Edmonds, who has his roots in Boonville, New York, I received a picture book which puts me pleasurably in mind of what it was like to live in the canal country of upstate New York a century ago. *Black Cotton Stockings* (Country Books, \$5.00) has been compiled and edited by **Ron Ryder** with the photographic collaboration of Jim Fynmore. The pictures, which tell the homely Tom Sawyer story of any American small town, were found in private collections, on the old glass plates of a photographer's shop, and in many an attic. The earliest go back to the 1870s: the trained bear on his hindlegs being led up Main Street; the balloon ascension at the country fair; the family groups, names long since forgotten; the deer shoot with four does, three bucks, and two rabbits which hang from a log; the six brand-new model A's without windshields or mudguards, lined up before the automobile supply shop; the mess of trout; the canal boats; the balky new mule having his tail twisted; and the beautiful Lansingkill Gorge as seen by a canawler.

Two chapters particularly deserve praise: the first describing the country hardware store owned and operated by Mr. Ryder's father, and the festive account of the Comstock Opera House with pictures and clippings of what went on there. This is a more leisurely, less anxious America than we know, and I much enjoyed my momentary life there.

Greek tragedy in Washington

The Day Lincoln Was Shot by **Jim Bishop** (Harper, \$3.75) has the inevitability and the emotional wallop of a Greek tragedy. Here hour by hour is the gripping, remorseful story of Lincoln's last day; the chronicle is built on facts assembled from a multitude of sources. The details are semi-humorous, as in the incidents with which Lincoln regaled the Cabinet meeting in the morning; portentous in the conflict between Stanton and Lincoln; mystifying in the hold which John Wilkes Booth had over the conspirators (the most vague and speculative part of the book); fortuitous in the ease with which Booth made his way to the State Box in Ford's Theatre; deeply pathetic as the news went home to the country. You know the ending before you begin, and would prevent it if you could, but instead you are swept along in the mounting tension and tumult of this tragic and costly day.

In his modest foreword Mr. Bishop claims no more than the skill of an assembling journalist, but

Danger....and....Drama



Raft of Despair

By ENSIO TIIRA

An incredible story of courage and endurance

ALONE WITH the body of his dead friend on a 4-foot-square raft adrift in the Indian Ocean . . . weakened from starvation and thirst and the torture of broiling days and freezing nights—Ensio Tiira suddenly faced a mortal attack by a school of man-eating sharks. This is one of many gripping moments in this suspenseful, true account by a man who survived 32 days of hell under conditions unmatched in the history of the sea. "A notable addition to epics of the sea."—*Daily Telegram*

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By ROLF MAGENER

FOREWORD by Heinrich Harrer, author of the best-selling *Seven Years in Tibet*. The extraordinary story of how two of Heinrich Harrer's fellow prisoners escaped from the British by bluffing their way across India and through the Burmese jungle to a dubious sanctuary with the Japanese. Hair-breadth escapes, ingenious disguises, forged papers, bizarre adventures in a fabulous true story.

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The Red Petticoat

By BRYAN MacMAHON



author of
Children of the Rainbow,
The Lion Tamer

WHAT CAN we say about Bryan MacMahon that the critics have not said more eloquently? It is no secret that he writes like an angel, that he is in love with life, that he possesses the sensitivity of a poet and a rich, reckless brisk humor. Without question Bryan MacMahon is one of the foremost of living writers, and now, in this new collection of 20 short stories, we have additional proof that there is a literary giant among us. "The joy of living runs through his stories like a shout in the blood."—*Time*

\$3.00

The Goodly Seed

By JOHN WYLLIE

MANY MEN from many nations, thrown together in a Japanese prison camp, live their lives amidst violence, tragedy and comedy. "By far the best first novel of the year,"—C. P. Snow, *The Sunday Times*. "A truly humane novel which may properly be called inspiring."—WALTER ALLEN, *New Statesman*.

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one should add that he has been slowly and patiently gathering this material for twenty-five years, and that his sense of order and his selection of what is telling and relevant make this a document of irresistible authenticity.

Chaucer's England

Plantagenet England in the fourteenth century was a country in the midst of violent change. Feudalism still preserved the ancient loyalties of king, noble, and serf, but Parliament was beginning to challenge the absolute power of the throne, and the people cried out against the ceaseless fighting in France. The castles, with their oriel windows, exquisite carving, and tapestries, were more comfortable than those of an earlier day, but they could not shut out the Black Death which struck and would strike again with decimating effect. The knights who won their spurs at tilting rode off to their death in Europe leaving the manors untended. The serfs were restive, and under the excitable leadership of Wat Tyler and John Ball were to rise in the Peasants' Revolt. At court Geoffrey Chaucer, King's messenger and diplomat, was commemorating the age in his ruddy poetry. And in the walled town of London in his great white palace, the Savoy, lived John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, the most admired and feared of the King's sons. John's story, his aspiration to be King, and his love for Katherine Swynford, the mistress whom he eventually married, form the basis for an historical romance, vivid, partisan, and picturesque, *Katherine*, by Anya Seton (Houghton Mifflin, \$3.95).

Miss Seton tells her story through the impressions, the passions, and the remorse of her heroine, Katherine. We see Katherine first as a fifteen-year-old, fresh from a convent and on her way to Court where her older sister Philippa is serving the Queen. The April countryside is fresh and smiling, the rude inns in sharp contrast to the pomp of Windsor Castle, where the impressionable girl first watches the King and his sons at dinner in the Great Hall and marvels at the richness of the women's gowns. Here it is that her unsuspected beauty first begins to attract men, among them the stubby Saxon knight, Sir Hugh Swynford. Katherine's glimpse of this lustrous world is cut short by her swift and brutal marriage to Sir Hugh; the isolation which follows in his cold, barren manor in the Lincolnshire fens is a prison from which she is finally rescued by the compassion of John of Gaunt. What begins as pity soon leads to love, so Katherine begins her ten years in thrall.

The novelist has created the verisimilitude of that distant century in a dialogue which is nicely shaded for cleric, noble, and commoner; by description — the Black Death at Bolingbroke, the Tournament at Windsor, the Coronation of Richard II, the storming of the Savoy — scenes which are as rich as tapestry; in her deft recording of little things;

and most of all by the naturalness and force of her characterizations — the brusque Hugh; Gibbon, the ailing overseer; Brother William, the leech and confessor; Geoffrey Chaucer, Katherine's brother-in-law; the Gascon bodyguard, Nirac; Lady Blanche, so regal even on her deathbed; and the unforgettable John and Katherine. She defends her lovers from the vilification of the chroniclers, and by her skillful narrative she brings to life a distant past.

The light that never failed

Books describing the isolated and venturesome life are always appealing, and one of the very best that I have read in many a moon is *We Bought an Island* by Evelyn M. Richardson (Macrae Smith, \$3.50). Mrs. Richardson and her husband, Morrill, are Canadians; and for generations she and her people have been lighthouse keepers. She fell in love with Morrill when she was twenty and he twenty-four; they dreaded the thought of city life, and when the opportunity offered, with their minute savings they bought the little island of Bon Portage off the tip of Nova Scotia. With Morrill's salary of lightkeeper as their mainstay they planned to do mixed farming, keep a cow, enjoy the black duck when the flocks came in, and raise their children within the safety of the white tower with its sloping walls.

Bon Portage is three miles long with rocky shores, a diminutive, wind-twisted woods, and in its interior a fresh-water pond and marsh. For most of their life there they had no telephone, and their only signals of distress were a flag on the tower, a fire on the point, or spaced gunshots, none of which was certain to attract attention. They made the most of every asset and had the humor and fortitude to withstand the hardships. The care of the lamps; the tank to hold the soft rain water; the berrying; the purchase of an ox to tow their heavy work; the rescue of mariners who were washed ashore; the gunning parties in the fall; the teaching of the children through the long winter months; the heavenly respite of Christmas; the awakening to a sub-zero house (for they never dared to leave a fire overnight); the love of every cranny of their small world; the loss of Laurie — all this is told naturally, intelligently, and in pages charged with affection. *We Bought an Island* received the Canadian Governor-General's Award and no honor was ever more deserved.

From Pennsylvania to China

Looking back across the Pacific from her Green Hills Farm in Pennsylvania, Pearl S. Buck tells in *My Several Worlds* (John Day, \$5.00) of the personal experiences which tempered her philosophy, and of her findings when she returned to the United States from China and began to compare the western world with Asia. All the Oriental sections of the book are irresistible — full of sparkle

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LEWIS CARROLL

By Derek Hudson

A fresh and full account of the man who hid behind the pen name of Lewis Carroll. Centering on that memorable aspect of Rev. C. L. Dodgson's life—his creation of *Alice*—this extensive biography is conducted in the spirit of gratitude and affection owed this genius who captured the essence of childhood wonder. \$4.50

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THEATRE

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The momentous period known as the "interregnum" is the core of this fourth volume of E. H. Carr's *A History of Soviet Russia*, the foremost study of the Russian revolution. "The transition from Lenin to Stalin, a confusing and dramatic stage in the evolution of the Soviet dictatorship, emerges for the first time in clear and objective outline in Mr. Carr's masterly analysis."—*New York Times*. \$5.00

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and warmth, sharply drawn people, and a great rattle of incident and conversation. When she writes of Europe and the United States, Mrs. Buck becomes not exactly diffident but definitely an observer, a polite but not uncritical visitor. In the East, she is at home. Although the author doesn't discuss it, the difference in feeling is plain to see and becomes very affecting.

I admire Mrs. Buck's good sense, her good temper, her resolute refusal to write about her private affairs when they concern living people (she writes at great length, and charmingly, about her parents), her modesty about her work, and her statement that she thinks she's had a fine life, on the whole. Actually, she has had a life that would have reduced a lesser woman to a pulp — long periods of loneliness and poverty, the nerve-racking death of her mother whom she dearly loved, an unhappy marriage, a defective child, the torturing worry of conditions in China and her final eviction from the country which, regardless of ancestry and politics, is her native land and always will be. She does not claim that these things did not hurt, but she refuses to whine about them, and she does not ask the reader to weep for her troubles.

Rough justice in the Southwest

Trial by Don M. Mankiewicz, the Harper Prize Novel of 1955 (Harper, \$3.50), is a study of racial injustice in the combustible Southwest. Angel Chavez, a senior in the San Juno High School and leading hitter on the baseball team, ventures onto a beach where Mexicans are not allowed, especially in early June when "grunion" parties are in order. It is after dark, the campfires have been lit, the drinking has started, the lovers have begun to pair off, and Angel, half in defiance, half in curiosity, has edged his way down the long flight of steps close to the forbidden area. On a landing he encounters the younger sister of a classmate, who seems pretty and not averse to petting; when she has had enough she strains free, starts up the stairs, and collapses. Angel can disappear or shout for help. He does the braver thing and within minutes is accused of rape.

The story is built on the contending forces in the community: the Commies, using Angel as a symbol of Sacco injustice; the rabid patriots who would like to see him hanged; and the decent but confused liberals like David Blake. In court Angel is represented by Barney Castle, a tough-minded trial lawyer, and David, whose honesty and indignation are unavailing. David is the embodiment of the conscientious American public, and I only wish that the diary in which he records his impressions were a little less wooden. The hysteria follows a pattern which is familiar to us; the trial itself is exciting, but the characters are incredibly black and white in this social study reminiscent of the 1930s.

BOOKS

The Editors Like

Anthologies

A TREASURY OF YIDDISH STORIES edited by Irving Howe and Eliezer Greenberg. (Viking, \$5.95.) Formal literature is a fairly recent development in Yiddish, but its accomplishment is already impressive. The editors have provided helpful notes on the authors and on the world of the East European Jews which the stories largely describe.

AN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MODERN AMERICAN HUMOR edited by Bennett Cerf. (Hanover House, \$3.95.) A well-chosen cross section of comic prose and verse, not to mention unexpected odds and ends from the theater, vaudeville, radio, and the editor's memory.

A TREASURY OF IRISH FOLKLORE edited by Padraic Colum. (Crown, \$5.00.) By cannily denying that he is a folklore scholar, Mr. Colum has issued himself license to include as folklore practically anything that takes his fancy — a system that makes an unorthodox and delightful collection.

SIDEWALKS OF AMERICA edited by B. A. Botkin. (Bobbs-Merrill, \$5.95.) A little of everything about American cities and what goes on in them; not quite the folklore the author claims it is, but thoroughly engaging.

Fiction

THE KILL by Emile Zola. (Farrar, Straus & Young, \$3.75.) An early work, previously not easily available in translation; and if the book is not one of Zola's major works, it is still a powerful, fast-moving study of sexual and financial swindling in the disorderly Paris of the Second Empire.

THE RED PETTICOAT by Bryan MacMahon. (Dutton, \$3.00.) Twenty short stories on a variety of themes, held together by their Irish setting and the author's subtle style and wryly romantic viewpoint.

THE OTHER PLACE by J. B. Priestley. (Harper, \$3.00.) A collection of unusual stories, written by an expert, which have to do with the supernatural and the power of hallucination in men's lives.

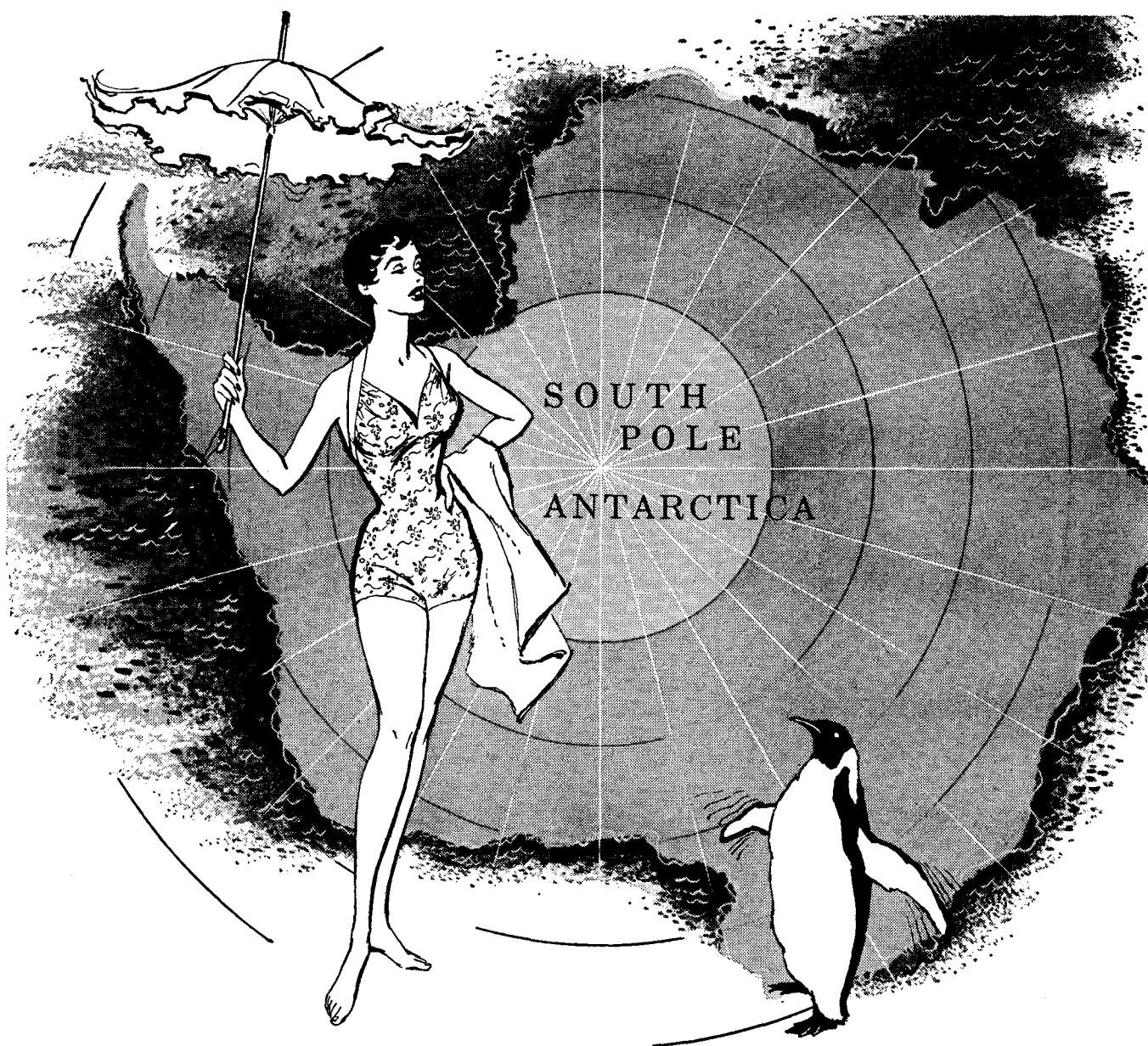
HADRIAN'S MEMOIRS by Marguerite Yourcenar. (Farrar, Straus & Young, \$4.00.) Cast in the form of a letter from the aging emperor to his seventeen-year-old grandson, this prize-winning novel is a scholarly reconstruction of Hadrian's life, times, and complex character. A leisurely, coolly meditative, and distinguished book.

Pocket Collections

SIX GREAT MODERN SHORT NOVELS. (Dell, 50¢.) This formidable collection, which includes Faulkner, Joyce, Melville, Gogol, Katherine Anne Porter, and Glenway Wescott, is top level all the way, a rare thing in such enterprises.

AVON BOOK OF MODERN WRITING edited by William Phillips and Philip Rahv. (Avon, 50¢.) Stories by Mary McCarthy and Alberto Moravia are the high points in Avon's second book of previously unpublished fiction, poetry, and criticism.

NEW WORLD WRITING, sixth Mentor Selection. (New American Library, 50¢.) Another lively anthology of contemporary writing from various countries, some of it experimental, all of it worth attention.



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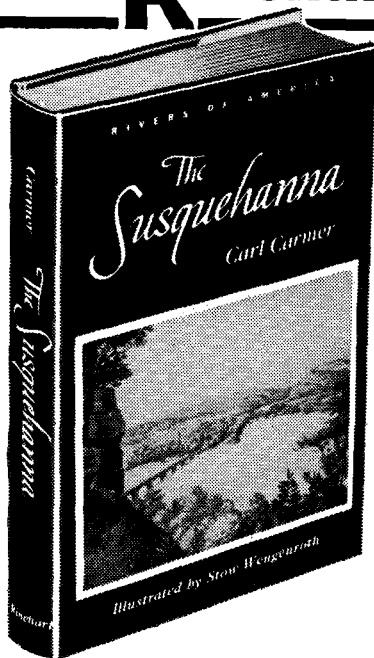
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Reader's Choice

BY

CHARLES J. ROLO



Fragebogen (Doubleday, \$6.00) by **Ernst von Salomon** is a detestable but fascinating personal history, which confronts us with the boast and the sneer of unrepentant German nationalism. The fact that it has become the No. 1 post-war best-seller in West Germany is a sharp reminder of how dangerously distempered the German mind remains.

Ernst von Salomon was a military cadet when the First World War ended. He enlisted in the *Freikorps*, a revolutionary formation of die-hard nationalists who sought to overthrow the Weimar Republic; and he was imprisoned for his part in the murder of Foreign Minister Rathenau. The *Freikorps* made an important contribution of ideas, tactics, and personnel to the National Socialist movement. But von Salomon himself, after 1930, withdrew from direct involvement in politics. He became a well-known novelist and film writer, and his work as historian of the *Freikorps* received the official endorsement of the Hitler regime. Arrested by the Allied Military Government in 1945, he spent a year in American camps and was eventually released as "an erroneous arrestee."

Von Salomon's 525-page book is cast in the form of answers to 131 questions of the *Fragebogen* (Questionnaire) which the Allied Military Government served on Germans suspected of being active Nazis. Fortunately, it comes to us with a first-rate preface by Goronwy Rees, former political adviser to the British Commander in Chief in Germany, who shows us the author in his true light and warns us that von Salomon is a virtuoso in the art of persuasion whose story must not be taken at its face value.

Von Salomon goes to work on the naïve assumptions of the questionnaire with a savagely humorous mixture of mockery, pedantry, and cynicism. He counters the conquerors' simplifications with a welter of political detail, which obfuscates the truth by what might be complication *ad absurdum*. He cannily keeps shifting his key from blunt avowal of dis-

credible fact to arrogant self-righteousness or sad-eyed consternation at man's inhumanity to man.

What emerges is an autobiography which is not only a vindication of the author — who from a legal standpoint has to be pronounced not guilty of collaboration with the Nazis — but which also implicitly vindicates the German people and very cleverly puts their accusers in the dock.

Although, the preface tells us, von Salomon once boasted of his contempt for the standards of civilization, he now pictures himself as a civilized dilettante — a gourmet, bohemian, and gay lover — who has retained an abiding faith in the old-fashioned Prussian principles and virtues. He intimates that most of the Germans who knew what was really going on shared his disgust for the Nazis. This much, of course, is standard apologetics. But the fundamental point in von Salomon's answer to the democratic powers projects us into the stratosphere of effrontery. Hitlerism, he says ruefully, merely carried to "feverish" extremes all the "methods and thought processes" of that fuzzy and infantile system known as democracy. In effect, von Salomon proclaims that the Anglo-Americans are the guilty ones; that it is their ideas which have spread contamination. His whole book is an invitation to his countrymen to face up to their conquerors with an impudence as brazen as his own.

Von Salomon's diabolic triumph is that he has brought off a *tour de force* of dialectical hocus-pocus within the pages of a graphic and dramatic personal history. The author's political adventures; his relationship with his mistress (who toward the end is disclosed to be Jewish); his amusing exchanges with his publisher; his romance with a French girl in the Basque country; his experiences in the hands of the Americans — all this and much more is absorbing stuff, brilliantly handled.

The youth of a genius

Recently published in English for the first time, *The Private Diaries of Stendhal* (Doubleday, \$7.50) are perhaps an even more arresting close-up of a singular human being than the *Journals* of Boswell. Robert Sage's translation has admirably captured the dry intensity of Stendhal's style, and the background material supplied by Mr. Sage is a model of enlightening editing.

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Begun in 1801 — when Henri Beyle (who later adopted the pen-name, Stendhal) was a sublieutenant in the French army of occupation in Milan — the diary runs from his eighteenth to his thirty-first year. Like Boswell, the youthful Stendhal records his petty vanities, humiliations, and successes; jots down rules and admonitions for self-improvement; gives details of his expenses, his health troubles and health theories ("I have a pain in the mesentery from drinking a cup of coffee"), his everlasting pursuit of women — all this with a total lack of self-consciousness. It might be Boswell speaking when Stendhal writes: "Last night I was a man of the best society, a brilliant man . . ." But Stendhal's journal differs from Boswell's in two important respects. It was dashed off with a determination not to polish or even erase and consequently it reads less smoothly. On the other hand, it displays a far greater insight: its author is a man of much deeper intelligence and larger powers of analysis than Boswell.

Early in life, Henri Beyle resolved to become a professional "observer of the human heart." He methodically set about perfecting himself in this domain by studying the works of great writers; by busily frequenting society and observing the mores and passions of real people with cool-eyed detachment; but above all by relentlessly honest self-analysis, which was his basic purpose in keeping a diary. His specific ambitions were to be "the successor of Molière" and also a dashing "seducer of women"; and here he sadly misjudged his capacities. For his literary talents were neither comic, poetic, nor dramatic; and his only asset as an amorist was a boundless capacity to keep trying. But when Beyle later turned his hand to the novel, his cultivation of what we would now call psychological insight bore fruit in two masterpieces. And time has vindicated the uncompromising demand he made on himself as a writer — "I must always work for the twentieth century."

The Private Diaries of Stendhal have a number of notable facets: the author's planned pursuit of happiness — first in accordance with the formula, ambition gratified plus love equals happiness, later through the formula, love plus work; the extremely diverse love affairs, recounted with a piquant mixture of romantic exaltation, cynicism, and analytic detachment; the lively panorama,

ranging from Naples to Moscow, of the Napoleonic era; the intimate communion with a young man who is systematically forming himself into a literary genius.

Three novels

Set in a decaying country mansion in the southwest of Ireland, *The World of Love* (Knopf, \$3.50) by **Elizabeth Bowen** is a finely drawn study of dissonant relationships in a household dominated by the romantic image of a man long dead. Antonia's favorite cousin, Guy, from whom she inherited the estate of Montfort, was engaged to Lilia when he was killed in the First World War. Antonia more or less adopted the girl, a contemporary of hers; eventually married her off to a farmer; and entrusted him with the management of Montfort. Despite a suspicion that Guy may have deceived her, Lilia has invested all of her emotion in the memory of her youthful romance, and has made the worst of her marriage to a man who passionately loved her. At the story's opening, Lilia's twenty-year-old daughter, Jane, discovers in the attic a package of Guy's love letters, which — highly improbably, to my mind — she refuses to surrender. The image of Guy now takes possession of Jane's imagination, and the mystery surrounding the letters remains the central tension of the novel.

Miss Bowen is a writer of consummate artistry. Her superb talent for the re-creation of place colors *The World of Love* with a glowing evocation of the Irish countryside in June. The values of her story are registered in small, subtle ways — brief scenes; moments of low-keyed drama; sharp, shapely asides. She achieves a marvelous delicacy of shading in presenting a complex relationship — the bond, for instance, between Lilia and Antonia: a compound of shared memories of Guy, long intimacy, and a persistent but almost cozy animosity. But having said all this, I must add that Miss Bowen's book seems to me a somewhat disappointing work for a major novelist. The bits and pieces are brilliant, but the totality is slight, the final impact rather weak. The novel's drama and its meanings are decidedly lacking in resonance.

Another of the most gifted British novelists, **C. P. Snow**, has written a book that is as subtly shaded in its treatment of human relations as Miss Bowen's; but in the case of *The New*

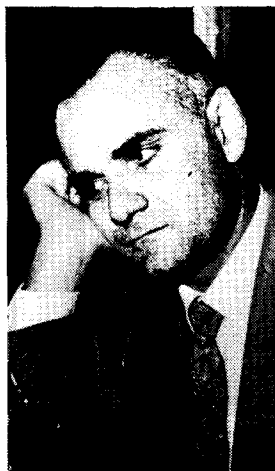
Men (Scribner, \$3.50), the subject — the discovery of atomic fission and its aftermath — is a large and intrinsically dramatic one. The author has himself done advanced work in physics, and during the last war he held an important government post having to do with the allocation of scientists. In its main lines, his story is clearly a pretty faithful account of what happened at Harwell, Britain's Oak Ridge, in the years leading up to and immediately following America's production of the atom bomb.

But *The New Men* is far removed from the journalistic novel of contemporary history, in which mechanically constructed characters are manipulated for the purpose of dramatizing political issues. Mr. Snow is an artist, and he is concerned with particular truths, not with projecting a thesis. His characters are highly individual human beings, convincingly created — the scientists and government officials involved in the atomic drama. He has presented their conflicts of ambition, loyalty, and responsibility in all their complexity, and with a calm understanding of the different attitudes which emerged — an understanding which extends even to the motives of the traitor. *The New Men* handles a fateful new theme with challenging insight and impressive moral sensitivity. To the best of my knowledge, it is the first novel which searchingly explores the moral dilemmas created by the atom bomb.

My huge aversion for the massive historical novel — a prejudice rooted in the conviction that history and fiction are mutually injurious — prevents me from saying more than a few words about *The Cornerstone* (Pantheon Press, \$4.50) by Zoë Oldenbourg. This chronicle of the lives of three generations of knights of the House of Linnieres re-creates a crowded panorama of thirteenth-century France — the tournaments and world of courtly love; the ravages of religious warfare; the spirituality, ruthlessness, and squalor. Miss Oldenbourg's first novel, *The World Is Not Enough*, was enthusiastically reviewed and widely read in 1948; and I suspect that her present saga will fare even better with those on the lookout for historical fiction of the highest order. The novel has won the Prix Femina in France; it was a Book Society choice in England; and it is a Book-of-the-Month Club selection in the United States.

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REFLECTIONS AT FIFTY by James T. Farrell. Vanguard, \$3.75.

Some of the essays in Farrell's volume deal with specific writers—Joyce and Ibsen, Mencken, Dreiser, Anderson. Some are personal—"How *The Face of Time* Was Written," "My Beginnings As a Writer." The rest are a mixed bag which includes general essays on literature; a fine account of John Dewey's handling of the Trotsky inquiry in Mexico in 1937; and Farrell's testimony in his successful proceedings to restrain the Philadelphia police from interfering with the sale of the Studs Lonigan novels. Mr. Farrell's writing is as usual plodding and repetitious, and his thought is seldom subtle or particularly original. But his moral courage, his massive intellectual energy, his unbounded dedication to the craft of letters, make this volume as a whole both forceful and appealing.

FAITH AND FREEDOM by Barbara Ward. Norton, \$3.75.

A few years ago, Miss Ward left the London *Economist* and settled for a time in Australia, with the result that *Faith and Freedom* is not, like her previous books, the product of close, day-to-day contact with the problems of the West. The greater part of it is a far-ranging inquiry into the history of human societies, which seeks to establish "the interaction between what is conditioned and what is free in human affairs and the pattern which this interaction has created . . ." Miss Ward, a Roman Catholic, sees the growth of the concept and the reality of freedom as bound up with religious faith; and she takes the view that the Reformation, with its division of Christendom, sowed the seeds of many of the ills which afflict Western civilization. The latter part of the book turns to the contemporary situation, and suggests political and economic measures which will promote freedom and justice in Western society.

THE LIGHT OF DISTANT SKIES by James Flexner. Harcourt, Brace, \$10.00.

The second volume in Mr. Flexner's history of American painting covers the period from 1760 to 1835. Although the author provides entertaining sketches of the flamboyant Benjamin West, the cantankerous Stuart, and that enchanting jack-of-all-arts, Charles Willson Peale, his major concern is with the effect on colonial painters of their first contact with European art, and the reasons for the genteel blight that settled on American painting after the initial rush of development under European influence. Scholarly and witty, the book is rewarding reading in every respect. The black and white illustrations are very good of their kind.

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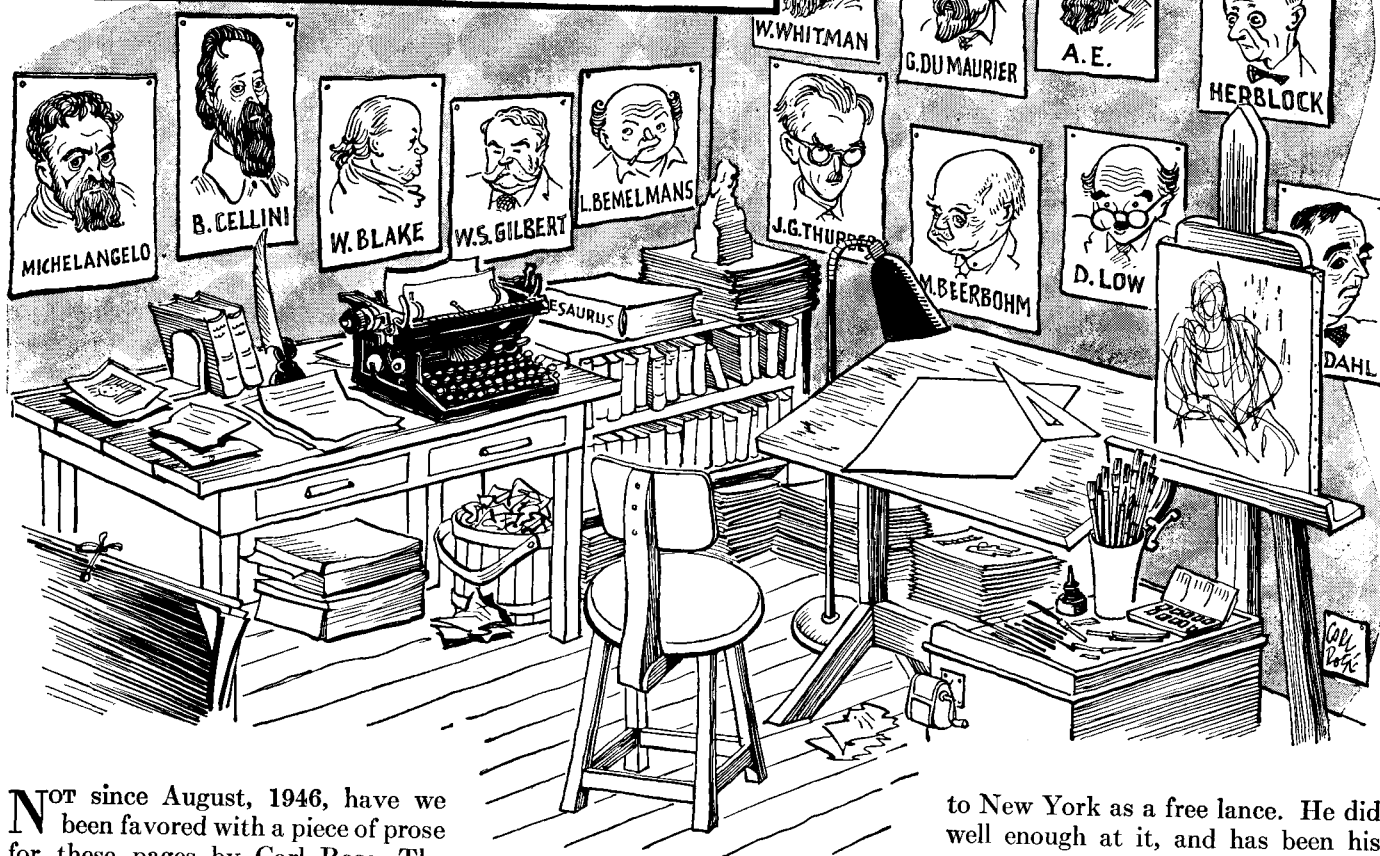
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ACCENT ON LIVING



NOT since August, 1946, have we been favored with a piece of prose for these pages by Carl Rose. The length of the interval is deplorable. As an illustrator — indeed our only illustrator for the past decade — Carl has lent corroboration to even the most accomplished of our authors; the text with a tendency to wander he has restored to the rails with a concise pictorial point. He never gets in the author's way or tries to take over his job. He has the true journalist's respect for the calendar, the clock, and the deadline. He is celebrated among publishers, also, as that prodigy of illustrators who not only reads but understands the text assigned to him, and it is no uncommon thing for him to discover three or four significant ideas in a bit of writing and combine them in a single fanciful but always relevant and economical visual scheme of his own. He prefers ideas to decorations, but his nature studies, his landscapes, and abstractions have beauty and, always, a delicate attunement to the written word.

At age seventeen, Carl decided to be a professional artist. By convinc-

ing a taxi company that he was old enough to vote, he got a job driving a cab; two years later he entered the Art Students League, which he attended for four years, driving the cab by day or night and going to classes in his off hours. At age twenty-three, he became an all-purpose assignment man for the New York *Sunday World*, and substituted on occasion for Clive Weed, the political cartoonist for the *Evening World*. He was one of the earliest contributors to Harold Ross's new venture, *The New Yorker*, where hundreds of his drawings subsequently appeared, and towards the latter twenties he found himself the political cartoonist of the Boston *Herald*, at what was considered a rousing wage in those times.

One of the numerous squeezes of the 1932 stock market brought Carl a tender of affectionate regard and a 60 per cent reduction in salary from the *Herald*. Carl put on his hat, packed up his family, and set off into the thick of the depression to go back

to New York as a free lance. He did well enough at it, and has been his own man ever since. He is one of the few people who, if he had to, could write, edit, and illustrate a good magazine, more or less by himself.

I say "if he had to" advisedly, for nothing is harder than persuading an artist to write. My own most protracted effort of this sort was to exact from Francis Dahl a sufficient text of his own to accompany a book of his wonderfully funny drawings of Bostonians and their pets. The project began a half-dozen years ago, and I received, after long silences, bulletins from the artist at one time or another: the writing had begun; all was going well; difficulties were being met; progress — not much but some. About two years passed with no news at all, and I was cheered to receive a call from Dahl that he had copy to show. What he handed me later that day was a single sheet on which he had written, in pencil, some ten lines of prose.

"What do you think of it?" he asked me.

"It's lovely stuff," I said, "but I don't believe there is quite enough."

Two or three more years passed, but then, out of the blue, Dahl produced the five chapters of prose comedy which appear in his recently published collection, *Birds, Beasts, and Bostonians*. A paragraph from his findings on cats will account, I trust, for our permanent interest in anything that Dahl writes:—

“Boston cats run pretty big, and unlike our squirrels they are fully furred. This may be because Bostonians who summer on the coast of Maine have access to the supply of ‘coon’ cats for which Maine is famous. These big bushy-tails bear no relation to the raccoon, but generations of them have served as barn cats, hunting all sorts of varmints and running tramps off the place. They take the transition from Blue Hill to Beacon Hill in stride, and when the moon glitters on the gold dome of the

statehouse, they are the ones who sing bass.”

Herblock (less frequently known as Herbert Block) wrote for the book of his cartoons from the Washington *Post* a commentary which stands in the very front rank of American writing on public affairs. Titled *The Herblock Book*, it was a thoroughgoing success, but the publishers still recall the agonies of the author in bringing it to its ultimate perfection. Herblock is the acknowledged master of titling and caption writing and he was determined that his text should meet his customary standard. “The man was a lapidary,” his editor explains. “If he underlined a dozen or twenty words on each of his galley proofs, we spent twenty minutes with him on each word before he let it stand or found the better one.”

It was characteristic of Carl Rose

that he objected earnestly when I told him that I proposed to say something about him here in print. There are so many better artists who write better, he argued, that it would be absurd. He rattled off a long list, which began with Cellini and the sonnets of Michelangelo and extended through Carroll, Thackeray, Day, Thurber, and many others. He sent me a sheaf of charming pages written and illustrated for *Life*, when it was a humorous weekly, by F. G. Cooper; he reminded me of the seahorse cover which E. B. White painted for *The New Yorker*, asserting offhandedly, from his reservoir of total recall, that this was “some time in 1933.” As I write this I have no idea of what Carl will devise for his headpiece for these observations, but I am sure that we shall have one, and on time, too.

CHARLES W. MORTON

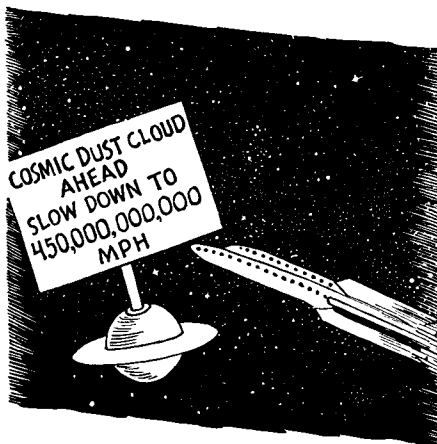
EUROPE INSTANTLY!

by CARL ROSE

DEAR MR. MORTON: As you might guess, the writer of this letter has a slightly more than academic interest in your dissertation (January *Atlantic*) on the speed of aerial transportation in the presumably near though still indefinite future. He cannot deny that by the present day's rather prosaic standards one or two thousand miles an hour sounds impressive. But to a sampler of science fiction the vehicles you describe are poky little buggies, struggling through the impeding atmosphere like ants slogging across a batch of molasses.

For to the science fictioneer—working in a time zone rarely earlier than the twenty-second century, and on to perhaps as late as A.D. 1,000,000—a two- or three-hour trip to India is no more than a leisurely amble to the corner drugstore. True, as of today, a velocity of a mile or so per second is more easily envisaged than thirty or forty thousand miles per second. Yet only a century ago *both* speeds were equally inconceivable to, say, Robert E. Lee or Ulysses S. Grant. Hannibal, pushing his elephants across the Alps, would have expressed something more than incredulity had his aide-de-camp suggested a conveyance as mundane as our little garden-variety jeep.

Today, in any science-fiction magazine, a two-hour journey to Europe is a slow crawl. Mention was made of forty thousand miles a second a few lines ago. Even that is a walking pace for a seasoned interstellar traveler intent on making the next galaxy but two before supper. Those galaxies are a couple of million light-years



apart, sir, and SF writers cannot afford to confine their characters to the easygoing velocity of light. A mere hundred and eighty-six thousand miles a second, or six trillion miles in a year, would get a man nowhere in a short lifetime of two or three hundred years (life expectancy will advance considerably in time to come, too).

Handy little concepts have been developed to overcome these drawbacks; they're called space warps, hyperdrive, superdrive, or FTL (faster than light). They involve intricate use of four or more dimensions and are explained passingly in a wholly incomprehensible and implausible fashion. Incomprehensibility is the reader's fault—if you're not smart enough to follow the writer's reasoning, he cannot be responsible. As for implausibility, your author need only point to the implausibilities in the structure of the atom. That'll stop the carpers every time.

Fuels for interstellar space ships are as esoteric as the principles of propulsion. Generally they are ingenious adaptations of the forces in the convenient little atom, although in intra-solar, or suburban, hops, forms of stored solar energy or knowingly contrived combinations of methane and ammonia—and in some cases even plain ordinary water—may be used. One thing is sure: in a cosmos as vast as ours, it would take an ordinary sentient Terran being (that's science-fiction talk, meaning man or guy) three or four billion years to encompass its known or Einsteinian boundaries, and a writer doesn't have the time to explain the facts of propulsion to ordinary, semi-sentient Terran beings. His characters get there and

most of them come back. What more do you want?

Once you accept the premise of faster-than-light velocities, you're all right, and can take in your stride such passages as: "The great ship hurtled



forward through the black abyssal depths of space at incredible multiples of the speed of light." It may have been in the same story that the captain turned to his navigator (no, not navigator, *astrogator*!) and the following dialogue took place: —

"How far are we from that cluster, Mr. Jones?"

"The astrogator rapidly scanned his telescopic video screen, punched his data into the galactic distance computer, and within seconds read the tape to the captain. 'About eighty light-years, sir.'

"Humm. Only three hours more, I should say."

They were making time that day.

Indeed, velocity and propulsion are minor factors in the logic of a capable space-opera writer. In one story, which took place on an off-the-beaten-track planet belonging to a minor sun in an obscure galaxy, the intelligent inhabitants had decided, eons ago, that gravity was nothing but a state of mind, and had proceeded, by sheer mind power, to overcome same. Understand, it wasn't sudden — it took long millennia . . . but by the time our travelers made planet-fall, the natives were scooting through their atmosphere like so many May flies. They had no wings, nor did they flap their arms; they just willed themselves off the ground and placed themselves wherever they wanted to be, with no more trouble than you or I would have reaching across the table for a Martini. What need for Dynaflo, or tubeless tires, or high-octane gasoline?

This particular planet was unusual in other respects. It seems in the long, dim corridors of evolution, when Life first began its struggle toward

sentience, plant life got the jump on the animal kingdom and acquired mobility and intelligence. The creatures consequently grew a humanoid form, and eventually developed into beauteous women, albeit their complexions were a light but pleasant shade of green, and chlorophyll coursed through their veins instead of blood. All were women, remember — this was a manless world. They reproduced by parthenogenesis and sustained themselves by ordinary photosynthesis: simply allowed the sun to shine on them and drank water conveniently, laced with plant nutrients like superphosphates, nitrate of ammonia, and whatever other elements keep our own terrestrial petunias blooming and happy.

This sort of existence should have been an uncomplicated one. Of course, it wasn't. The outstripped protein-producing animal life of the planet — rooted to the ground though it was, just like the vegetation on our own globe — had developed a primitive cunning and was exercising a subtle dominance over its infinitely more intelligent planet-mate. Naturally, the visitation of the human travelers caused some trouble, but our males passed a chemical miracle which resulted in freedom for the beautiful herbal natives and all ended happily. In fact, romance developed between a couple of the latter and our earthy heroes (they elected to stay on the planet although they had to drink distilled water for the rest of their lives), but the story ended before one could learn more of this unusual form of miscegenation. One does learn this, however: should Mother Nature ever run out of ideas, any number of our going SF writers could act as her gagmen without turning a typewriter ribbon.

To get back to our original topic, one other and very important type of science-fiction transportation must be mentioned. This is the instantaneous transmission of matter — or, in SF jargon, teleportation. There you sit, Mr. Morton, in your office, Room 202, at 8 Arlington Street, in the city of Boston, Massachusetts. In the next infinitesimal fraction of a second, you find yourself — greatly surprised, no doubt — on a blue rock overlooking a saffron sea roiling about the surface of a planet circling around a class G star in the Andromeda Nebula.

There's not much use in asking how you got there; you couldn't possibly begin to untangle the web of circum-

stances that put you in this fix. Your science fictioneer can explain only in very general terms: your body had probably disintegrated into its constituent atoms; and in the same instant, the atoms available on that remote world had shaped themselves into an exact duplicate of you, complete with cerebral memory cells, a six-hour growth of beard, the spare change in your pocket, and even your tweed suit and Argyle socks.

You will concede that this is a very fine operation indeed. For some strange reason, it never misses. Conceivably, a few of the atoms could become confused in their massive task of re-creation; hands may protrude from skull about where ears should be, and it would be better not to locate the ears at all — eventually you might find them in the vicinity of the shoulder blades. Such a thought may bring the light of inspiration to the eyes of a Dali; it would only evoke a snort of contempt from any self-respecting SF writer. When you get teleported, you are teleported complete and entire, just exactly as you are, and no nonsense about it. The forces that can bring about such a phenomenon are necessarily obscure but teleportation has gotten more science-fiction characters out of more hopeless predicaments than you can shake a force field at.

In view of such modes of transportation facing us in the far future, don't you think it would be better to settle for the slow, old-fashioned atmospheric hoppers of the next few decades? Plodding along at a glacial thousand miles an hour seems so much



preferable to a physical disintegration here on earth in order to make a five o'clock cocktail date on far Andromeda.

By the way, where did they hide the heat control in this stuffy Pullman roomette?

Sincerely yours,

CARL ROSE

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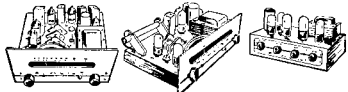
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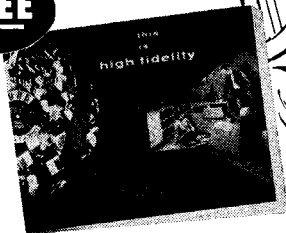


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RECORD REVIEWS

by JOHN M. CONLY

Bach: Brandenburg Concertos, Nos. 1-6 (Two versions. Felix Prohaska conducting Chamber Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera; Vanguard 540/542: three 12" LPs in album. Jascha Horenstein conducting Viennese instrumentalists; Vox DL 122: three 12" LPs in album with score). The Vox set is a particularly splendid production, with its authentic scoring and copious notes by Emanuel Winternitz; the Vanguard is an outstanding bargain, offering three records for the price of two. However, the music is the main thing, and by this criterion I prefer the Vanguard to the Vox, but like neither quite so well as London's Münchinger series (two 12", one 10").

Beethoven: Concerto No. 1 in C Major (Rudolf Serkin, piano; Eugene Ormandy conducting Philadelphia Orchestra; Columbia ML 4914: 12" LP). A virile, thoughtful performance; no vagaries or surprises; fine, solid sound; easily the peer of any other recorded version — perhaps the best.

Beethoven: Fidelio (Arturo Toscanini conducting Rose Bampton, Jan Peerce, Eleanor Steber, Sidor Belarsky, other soloists; NBC Symphony Orchestra; RCA Victor LM 6025: two 12" LPs in album with libretto). The engineers have done a fantastic job in processing this from the disk transcriptions of the 1944 broadcasts; the sound is highly acceptable. The performance, of course, is good all around, and in spots thrilling (listen to the grave-digging duet, side 3), but it is not, despite the jacket note, "complete." Two overtures — Fidelio and Leonore No. 3 — are supplied, but nearly all of the spoken dialogue has been left out (as it was in the broadcast, and apparently it could not be dubbed in convincingly), and this takes away much of the excitement of the Act II climax. Still, I wouldn't be without the set.

Brahms: Concerto No. 1 in D Minor (Artur Schnabel, piano; Fritz Reiner conducting Chicago

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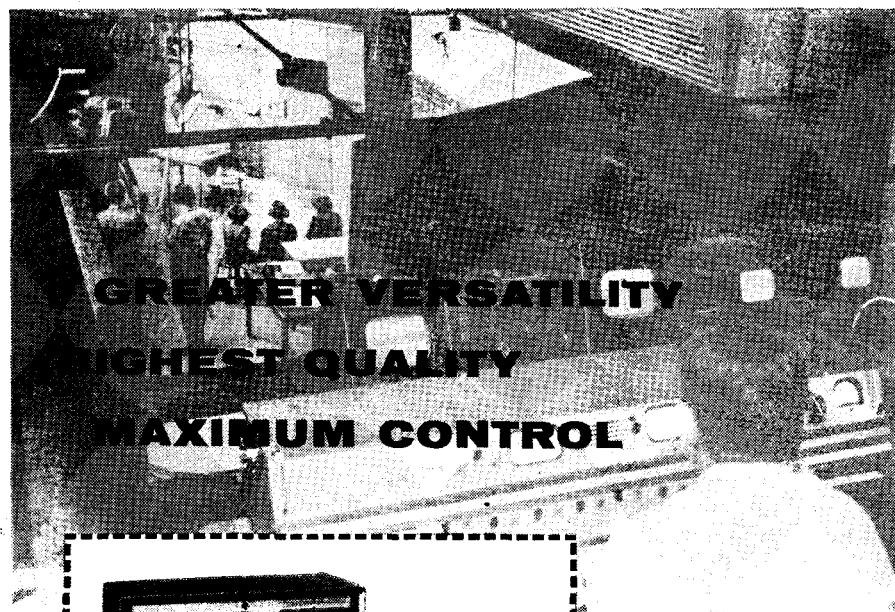
Symphony Orchestra; RCA Victor LM 1831: 12" LP). There is splendor in Rubinstein's playing, Reiner's conception, and the orchestra's sound in their wonderfully phonogenic hall. People who don't want so much splendor in their Brahms are urged to sample the grave lyricism of Backhaus and Böhm on London LL 911.

Brahms: Ballades, Capricci, Intermezzi, Rhapsodies (Wilhelm Kempff, piano; London LL 959, LL 960, LS 961: two 12" LPs and one 10"). The records are titled Brahms Recitals — No. 1 (Op. 10 and 76), No. 2 (Op. 116 and 119), and No. 3 (Op. 79 and 117), and from their excellent sound they are all new, not reprints of earlier London Kempff-Brahms. *To hear them all at once is like drinking a bucket of benedictine, but taken a little at a time they yield a melting, luscious beauty — equaled by almost no other music I know of.*

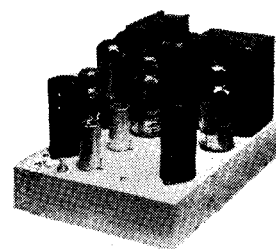
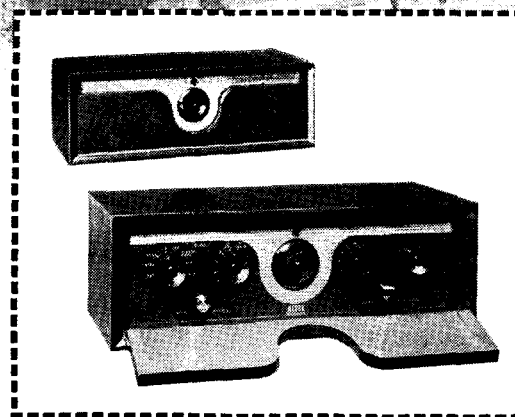
Dvořák: Biblische Lieder, Op. 99; Zigeunermelodien, Op. 55; Liebeslieder, Op. 83 (Hildegard Roessel-Majdan, contralto; Franz Holetschek, piano; Westminster WL 5324: 12" LP). Sweet and devout, direct and touching, the Biblical Songs are the chief treasure in this treasury. They are psalm settings, very simple and singable, and it is hard to think of anyone who might do them better than Miss Roessel-Majdan. Holetschek and the engineers are good, too; so are the Gypsy and Love Songs.

Haydn: Quartets, Op. 76 (Budapest String Quartet; Columbia SL 203: three 12" LPs). Here are Haydn's six greatest quartets — including the "Emperor" and the "Sunrise" — a tremendous creation, in near-perfect performance by the most eminent and self-critical players of our day, and there should be no rivalry. However, for Haydn Society, the Schneider Quartet (led by a former Budapest second violin) has produced a version which plays Fabius to the Budapest's Hannibal, enticing where the other commands, presenting poise against tension, and relaxation against precision, so that, after at least ten hours' listening, I cannot decide between them. I doubt that anyone will go wrong with either. You're on your own.

Milhaud: Suite for Violin, Clarinet, and Piano with Bartók: Contrasts for Violin, Clarinet, and Piano (Reginald Kell, clarinet; Melvin Ritter, violin; Joel Rosen, piano; Decca DL 9740: 12" LP). Milhaud's



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Suite, like nearly all his works, bespeaks an ebullience which goes down deep and never flags, a wonderfully refreshing phenomenon in this day and age; the performers quite obviously enjoy it, too. The Bartók was written, I believe, for Benny Goodman; it exploits beautifully if bitterly the sound of the clarinet. Both pieces are extraordinarily well recorded.

Mozart: Oboe Concerto, K.314 with **J. C. Bach: Andante** and **J. S. Bach: Arioso and Adagio** (Mitchell Miller, oboe; Daniel Saidenberg conducting Saidenberg Little Symphony; Columbia ML 4916: 12" LP). Mr. Miller is "Mitch," boss of Columbia Records' "pop" department, preceptor of Rosemary Clooney, Johnnie Ray, and others, and one of the country's best oboists. His Mozart is exemplary, and magnificently recorded; but why didn't he give us a complete J. S. or J. C. Bach concerto on the other side, instead of these three sweet samplings?

Prokofieff: Flute Sonata with **Roussel: Trio for Flute, Viola, and Cello** (Doriot Anthony Dwyer, flute; Jesus Maria Sanroma, piano; Joseph de Pasquale, viola; Samuel Mayes, cello; Boston B-208: 12" LP). Doriot

Dwyer is the young first-flute lady of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, up to her usual enchanting ways in this first authentic flute version of the Prokofieff sonata, a work that proves delightfully durable. The Roussel trio is less striking, but very pleasant.

Rossini-Respighi: La Boutique Fantasque (Robert Irving conducting Philharmonia Orchestra; RCA Victor-Bluebird LBC 1080: 12" LP). Twice this has happened now. On a cut-rate Bluebird record, RCA Victor has presented Robert Irving conducting the Philharmonia Orchestra in ballet music with such irresistible verve and rhythm, in such brilliantly coruscant sound, that staid and aging listeners feel they want to get up and dance. The first occasion was his *Swan Lake* recording. Jocularly aside, this is something out of ordinary experience; here is a conductor really to pay attention to.

Schubert: Symphonies No. 1 in D, No. 2 in B Flat (Sir Thomas Beecham conducting Royal Philharmonic Orchestra; Columbia ML 4903: 12" LP). It was a long wait, but worth it. There are real substance and impetus in this early Schubert, and the buoyant bearded baronet de-

livers it with joyous conviction. The recorded sound is rich and faithful — and, indeed, I can think of no reason not to own this one.

Sibelius: Symphonies No. 3 and No. 7 (Anthony Collins conducting London Symphony Orchestra; London LL 1008: 12" LP). Sibelius will be ninety next year, and London apparently has commissioned Collins to record all his symphonies (his toughest competition may well be Thomas Jensen, conducting the Fifth Symphony — for London). These two, in scintillant firr sound, are beauties, especially the Third.

Tchaikovsky: Violin Concerto (David Oistrakh, violin; Franz Konwitschny conducting Saxon State Orchestra; Decca DL 9755: 12" LP). Slowly but surely, Oistrakh is taking over the violin concerto literature. Here goes the Tchaikovsky. You can't beat this, neither can you resist it. The recording, though nothing unusual, is adequate, and Oistrakh needs no more to assert primacy.

Verdi: Manzoni Requiem (Ferenc Fricsey conducting soloists, choir of St. Hedwig's Cathedral, RIAS Symphony Orchestra, Berlin; Decca DX 118: two 12" LPs in album with text). The competition here consists of Toscanini and the NBC and a new Angel album featuring Victor de Saba. Either of these Italian-trained giants should be able to outpoint Fricsey left-handed, but they don't. In fact, only in the tremendous excitement of the *Dies Irae* does he lose the lead, to Toscanini and the almost superhuman NBC orchestra. Throughout the rest of the work, Verdi's intent is best served by the Hungarian and his Germans, who give us a real *requiem*, full of longing, reverent and lovely.

La Groupe des Six (Georges Tzipine conducting Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire; Angel 3515-B: two 12" LPs). The Frenchmen called *Les Six* (five men, one woman) are Georges Auric, Louis Durey, Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, François Poulenc, and Germaine Tailleferre, who joined forces in 1920 to prevent post-war stagnation in composition, and probably succeeded. This 35th-year celebration album pays them tribute with a recording apiece (good ones, too) and a spoken introduction by Jean Cocteau. It is fascinating. Major item probably is Milhaud's Symphony No. 2, but everything is listenable. Try it.

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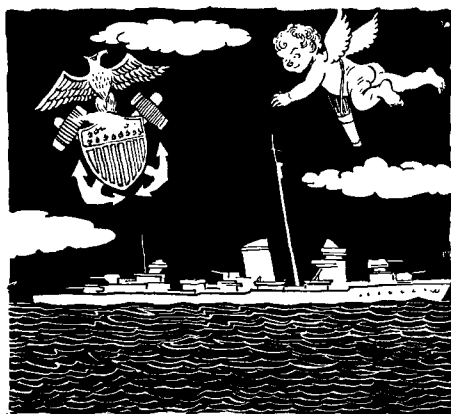
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THE BROWN-BAGGERS

by DONALD MORRIS

DONALD MORRIS is the author of a novel, *China Station*. A lieutenant junior grade, he is now serving aboard a destroyer.

IN NO profession is the cleavage between the married man and the bachelor deeper than it is in the Navy. Navy bachelors find on their ships a nucleus for their lives; the ship is their home and to it they return. They expect to spend occasional evenings aboard, and they are forever worrying about the drapes in the wardroom or the fact that Diesel oil is leaking from the shower.

The married officers, on the other hand, look on their ships as a sort of office in which a certain amount of time must be passed before they are at liberty to return home. Since it is necessary to obtain the permission of the Executive Officer before leaving the ship, married officers are exceptionally industrious during working hours. The instant "Now hear this. Knock off ship's work" sounds through the compartments, however, all the married officers on the ship who rate liberty appear like magic on the quarterdeck, each armed with a small brown suitcase in which toilet articles, laundry, and socks with holes are stuffed. On some ships, where the inspection of liberty parties is not overstringent, the rumble of their passage over the brow can be heard between "Knock off" and "ship's work" as they disappear up the piers.

The married officers are known as "Brown-Baggers" and are regarded by the bachelors as victims of a degrading and incurable disease.

On overseas tours, these Brown-Baggers form a pathetic group. Their little suitcases gather dust in the stateroom, and they themselves sit

in small, depressed clusters in the wardroom. They spend every spare minute in an exhausting analysis of the entire flow of Naval Communications, attempting to determine the exact date of their return. The fact that a single destroyer, operating in the Persian Gulf, has been transferred from Squadron Twenty-two to Squadron Twenty-four will be picked at for days, until every ramification of the transfer, and its possible effect on the duration of their own tour in the Caribbean, has been thoroughly explored. Their mail from home is filled with the same sort of information. They will spend hours comparing the relative worth of two rumors, one acquired at the Dental Clinic in Washington from the wife of a Yeoman 3/c who is working in the Pentagon, and the other culled from an almost illegible note forwarded to the ship's barber from a friend who had been sitting behind a Rear Admiral in a movie. All in all, Brown-Baggers are a breed apart.

My own induction into their ranks was fairly sudden. I had reached the point where the word "confirmed" was apt to be coupled with "bachelor," and I went through my naval life with a high disdain for the Baggers. I was able to walk through the wardroom on my way to an evening in town and smile pleasantly at a Bagger stuck with the night's duty; long ago I had rid myself of the slight twinge of pity that was all too apt to provoke a promise to return early and stand by for the unfortunate lout.

My conversion didn't even start with a simple little question. In the ten days my courtship of Sylvia lasted (that being all the leave I was able to finagle at the time), I was forced to repeat the question innumerable times, harping constantly on the fact that my ship's home port had just been switched to Cannes, and an affirmative answer would result in an immediate two-year honeymoon on the Riviera. But the best I was able to obtain before I had to return to the ship was a judicious "Well, I'm not going to marry anybody *else* this month."

From this stage I had to advance by mail, a process that placed a considerable strain on my vocabulary and on the Mail Orderly. For three weeks I was patronized by this individual, who, on returning from the Base Post Office, would gaily call out, "Hey, Mr. Morris! You

made out fine today, two fat ones." Once he entered the wardroom during dinner with a postcard, asking if "Je t'aime" was French or Italian. By this time a decision of sorts had been reached; I never did get a final answer, but since the letters had started to discuss the wording of the announcements, I felt it fairly safe to assume that a wedding was in the offing.

By this time my ship was in New York and Sylvia was back in Rabbit Shuffle, North Carolina. (Oh yes there is.) A strong warning should be issued to grooms about the guests they invite. One of the two males I wanted on hand was an old high school chum, long since graduated from West Point and now an Air Force Captain. He hadn't shot down seven Messerschmitts, but he had shot down a MIG, and on the Fourth of July at that. I hadn't seen him for years, but I called him anyway. "Sure thing, old man. . . . Rabbit Shuffle, eh? . . . Got an airstrip? . . . Never mind, I'll find out. . . . I'll be in San Diego that morning, and I have to be in New York by midnight, but I think I can make it. Have someone meet me at the airport. I'll change in the car."

Now I had frankly looked forward to cutting a bit of a swathe at the wedding. After all, I was the groom, and I had a gorgeous new uniform. I even had a sword, borrowed from a retired Rear Admiral. Miss Sylvia's Yankee, forsooth. This damyankee would stand on his own two feet.

Exactly eight minutes before the ceremony began, a station wagon



dashed into the front yard. From it debouched my future parents-in-law, my future sister-in-law, my parents, and two guests. In the midst of this admiring cluster was a tall unshaven figure clad in a sweat-stained flying suit with pencils and slide rules and knives sticking out of little pockets. On his back was stenciled the outline

of a MIG, with a large red cross splashed over it. It was a little hard to see the MIG, because my friend had a parachute slung over one shoulder. My father was carrying a clothes bag. My future mother-in-law was carrying a crash helmet. I think my mother had an oxygen mask.

"Sorry, old man. Couldn't change in the car. Have I got time for a swim? Say, that's a pretty small airport." My friend had arrived.

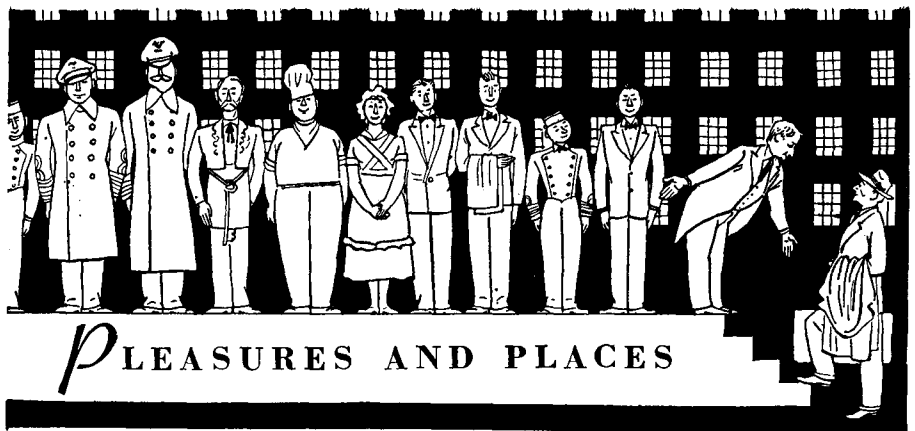
Standing in front of the altar, until Sylvia actually appeared at the head of the stairs, all I could hear over the music was the excited muttering of the guests. "Right to the end of the runway . . . thought he was going to bring that old Sabre Jet right into the waiting room . . . look on the airport manager's face . . . fourteen MIGs, wasn't it?"

The ceremony itself was no strain for the groom. I'd read all about *that*, and now it didn't matter if Sylvia hadn't answered my questions before, she answered in the one way I wanted to hear. I said "I will" so firmly that the Reverend Mr. McCauley reared back, and I didn't drop the ring. And I did kiss the bride. A whole passel of people kissed the bride. A lot of them even kissed the groom. I even had some lipstick on my left elbow when it was all over. This was nothing, however, to my high school chum. He even got some lipstick on his MIG.

I didn't really realize what it was to be married, however, until I got back to the ship. There the Captain gave me a wedding present. It was a little brown leather suitcase, just large enough to hold my shaving gear and pajamas and slippers and two pairs of socks with holes in them. And at four o'clock that afternoon,



for the first time in my naval career, I didn't hear the "ship's work" follow the familiar "Knock off." I was too far up Pier Seven.



P LEASURES AND PLACES

GERMAN HOTEL

by JOSEPH WECHSBERG

Traveler, musician, and journalist, JOSEPH WECHSBERG is the author of many books and articles. He spends most of his time traveling in Europe, with occasional intervals in this country.

AT the Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten in Hamburg your slippers are always placed on a white towel in front of your bed. The bed is made up "hard," "medium," or "soft," as you wish. The chambermaid puts a thermometer in your bath water, and the *Hausdiener*, or floor valet, puts spans in your shoes. The first morning, when you phone for breakfast, the floor waiter greets you correctly by your name — though there were seventeen new arrivals on the floor last night — and asks how you like your coffee made. Do you prefer your rolls dark or lightly baked? Your soft-boiled egg three minutes or three and a quarter? Breakfast is served on a leather tray, to avoid noise. Coffee-pot and egg are covered with cloth.

All wishes, whims, and preferences are marked down in a special guests' file. The next time the guest comes back to the hotel, no questions will be asked, but his bed, bath, breakfast, will be exactly to his liking. Everybody comes back. One rich German from Mexico City came for two weeks and stayed for two years.

By such attention to minute detail, the Vier Jahreszeiten ("Four Seasons") has become a serious competitor to the greatest hotels in Switzerland, France, Italy, London, and America. The best hotels always reflect the mood of their country. What the Swiss do by tradition, the French by charm, the Italians by elegance, the British by tact, and the Americans by efficiency, the Germans achieve by sheer organization.

In a Swiss hotel, the secrets of making coffee or polishing silver are passed on from father to son. In Germany, they are drilled into a man's subconscious. The Vier Jahreszeiten has 210 rooms (300 beds) and 520 employees — 1.73 employees for each guest. Each month, the employees get mimeographed "Instructions about the Organization and the Installations in Our Hotel." They start with *Ausstellungsvitrinen* ("Supervised by Frau Vermehren, room 230, all goods on display for sale") and end with *Zeitungsstand*, newsstand. Sample item, "Ironing Service for Guests: Articles received by chambermaid, forwarded by porter. Acceptable: laundry, men's suits, women's dresses, other apparel. Express service without special charge. On Saturday, items received until 14 hours, delivered until 17 hours. After 14 hours (and on Sunday until noon) articles ironed by tailor out of house." Such instructions exclude any misunderstanding.

The Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten is a microcosm of, and an object lesson for, Germany's incredible recovery, in less than ten years, from a defeated, devastated country to the Continent's major political and economic power. The recipe: organization + hard work + discipline. The management of the hotel never stops planning. Even human relations are carefully blueprinted. Every year a jubilees list is drawn up; employees of thirty and forty years' standing are honored by certificates and gifts. The oldest employee, hall porter Karl Braun, has been with the house for forty-seven years. Long-term guests receive presents and flowers on their birthdays and holidays.

Technical improvements are mapped out one year in advance. "In a well-run hotel the sound of hammering must never stop," says Herr Karl-Peter Littig, the manager.

"There's always a need for repair and improvement. We have a technical staff of sixty: electricians, upholsterers, painters, plumbers, woodworkers, paperhangers. If you don't keep after a place all the time, it will be run down in no time."

The management goes to unbelievable length to perfect the service. Guests arriving at the hotel for the first time are effortlessly handed over from *voiturier* to baggage porter to bellboy to reception desk to concierge to elevator operator and so on, until they find themselves comfortably installed in their rooms. "From the moment of arrival the guest must feel as though he'd come back to his home, a luxurious, well-run home," it says in the Instructions. This precision is the result of hard, long training. The employees synchronize their movements as though they were members of the Boston Symphony's first-violin section. The art of showing a friendly face is practiced as assiduously as Radio City's Rockettes practice tap dancing.

Such service must be paid for. Room rates range from 14 marks (\$3.50) for a single room without bath to 50 marks (\$12.50) for a bed-sitting room alcove with bath, plus 15 per cent service charge — which makes the Vier Jahreszeiten one of Germany's most expensive hotels.

At the hotel's restaurants, the waiters are always reminded to display the same deference toward the guest eating a sandwich and drinking a glass of mineral water as toward the man at the next table who ordered *Vierländer Mastente*, stuffed duck

nence is considered bad form. In Hamburg, as in London and Boston, the rich are often dressed worse than the poor. Two shabby-looking men eating *Kalbfeischklösschen* (meat balls) in the goblin-decorated dining room of the Vier Jahreszeiten may well be two millionaire members of Hamburg's patrician caste of merchant princes and shipping magnates.

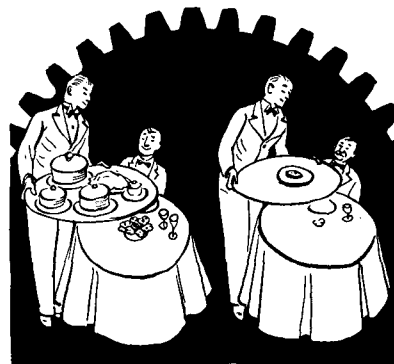
For rich men who cannot afford to order simple food in their palatial homes, the management of the Vier Jahreszeiten puts every day a few *Hausmannskost* (home-cooked) dishes on the menu: lentil soup, *Snuten und Poten* (pea soup with pigs' feet), *Strassburger Bohnengericht* (lamb, Princess beans, tomatoes, potatoes), *Sauerbraten* with potato *Klöße* and baked fruit, *Hamburger Pfannenfisch*, *Kalbshaxe* (calf's shin) *bürgerlich*. For particularly parsimonious plutocrats there is a 60-cent *Börsenfrühstück*, or stock exchange lunch, which has turned out to be a good investment. Quite a few connoisseurs of the 60-cent blue plate special give sumptuous wedding parties, receptions, and holiday banquets at the hotel for as many as five hundred guests.

Bills for a hundred bottles of champagne are not rare. (Price of champagne: 30 marks, \$7.50.) Some hosts stipulate that the champagne must be served in water glasses. Hamburgers take a dim view of the new rich in the Rhineland who order second-rate wines in silver buckets so that the label can't be seen.

For such banquets, all employees get mimeographed instructions which read like Orders of the Day for major army maneuvers. They specify the color of candles, the embroidered damask for the tables, the kind of flowers ("springlike"), the liqueurs to be served after the dinner ("Napoleon Brandy, to be followed by Rémy Martin, Cointreau, Drambuie, Hausmarke hell und dunkel"), the cigars and cigarettes to be offered ("North States, Astor, Kyriazy, Gloria"), and include such details as "Red carpet to be placed in front of side entrance at 1410 hours," or "Musicians get three sandwiches per person, beer or fruit-juice, between 2330 and 24 hours." The main banquet room has an "invisible window" in one wall through which the guests are constantly observed. Their wishes are often guessed before they are uttered.

Regular instruction courses are given by all department heads at

least once a week. The curriculum lists, among other subjects, a discourse on the fine art of meat cutting, how to recommend wines ("remind ladies that Moselle makes slim," "with ham and asparagus suggest a



good Franken wine in *Bocksbeutel*"), personal hygiene ("after eating fish, always rinse your mouth carefully so guests will not be offended by your breath"), and The Technique of the Friendly Smile ("must never appear strained"). The management bravely faces up to the fact that not everybody has been endowed by nature with tact and charm, but it insists that everybody can learn to be friendly and polite. Among the employees are seventy-five apprentices who have to learn their trade for three years, getting only board and room and a few marks pocket money. At the end of their apprenticeship they have to pass a stiff examination before they are accepted as regular employees. They don't mind, knowing that a *Lehrzeugnis* (certificate) from the Vier Jahreszeiten in Hamburg will open the door to any personnel office in Germany and elsewhere.

The average salary at the hotel is 100 marks (\$25) a week, which is considered good money in the German hotel trade.

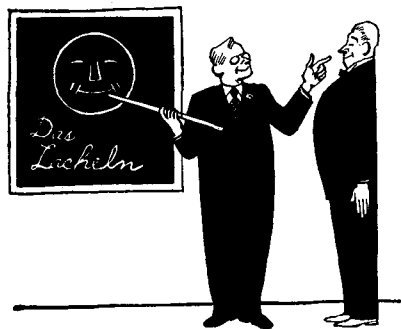
Compared with the venerable Palaces, Ritzes, and Plazas on both sides of the Atlantic, the Vier Jahreszeiten is something of an upstart. In 1897, Herr Fritz Haerlin, having made a fortune in business, added the Hotel Stadt London to his investments. It wasn't much of a place, but Haerlin, a man of vision, liked its location. It was on Neuer Jungfernstieg, the lovely lakeside promenade overlooking Hamburg's Binnen-Alster. Haerlin renamed the hotel "Vier Jahreszeiten" and started to add wings and stories. The rebuilding job was finished only in 1928. By that time, the Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten was a palatial white six-story structure,



with oranges, and a bottle of Rüdesheimer Berg Bronnen Trockenbeerenauslese 1950, at 65 marks (\$16.25). And why not? The mineral-water connoisseur may tomorrow be an important customer. The British influence has always been strong in the Free and Hanse Town Hamburg. To show off one's wealth and promi-

occupying a large part of the lake front.

Haerlin made it a truly elegant hotel. A white-bearded patrician, he had been awarded in 1909 the title *Hoflieferant* (court caterer) and right to display the coat of arms by His



Highness Prinz Heinrich von Preussen, who was a frequent guest at the hotel.

The interior style has been described as Timeless Antique in bedrooms and sitting rooms, and Medium Moderne in bathrooms, kitchens, and laundries. Haerlin's men went (and still go) to important auctions all over Europe, buying up furniture, rugs, paintings, gobelins. The rooms are furnished individually, conveying the warmth and discreet elegance of a civilized private home.

The hotel was taken over and damaged by the Wehrmacht during the Second World War. Further damage was caused during the week of the Allied saturation bombings in the summer of 1943. At the end of the war, Hamburg was second only to Berlin in the amount of destruction. Over 300,000 buildings were destroyed in the city — more than in the entire United Kingdom. The British Occupation Forces took over the Vier Jahreszeiten as an officers' club on May 3, 1945, and kept it until January 30, 1951, when they released it to Fritz Haerlin, Jr., the son of the founder.

Little was left of the civilized private home. The rugs were torn, the woodwork scratched, the old furniture broken. Many antiques and gobelins had disappeared. Even before the last Britisher moved out, the first of two hundred German workmen moved in. Working in shifts, eighteen hours a day, seven days a week, they finished the job in sixty-four days. On April 4, 1951, the Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten was reopened, looking more civilized than ever.

The job of reconstruction had been planned a year in advance down to

the smallest detail. A timetable had been drawn up for the workers. First, the rugs were removed and new cables were laid in the walls; while one group repaired broken furniture, another installed new bathrooms. Everything was replaced from doorknobs to drapes. While the painters moved in, electricians installed a new telephone exchange and teletype service, and personnel officers interviewed prospective employees. Of the pre-war employees, only one third were available. Many of the porters, waiters, cooks, floor valets, and painters did not come back from the battlefields.

Among the few fortyish employees was my floor waiter, a tall, friendly man who had been at the hotel in the thirties. Since then he had fought in the war, lived in prison camps, worked as steward on ships, and owned a small restaurant in the harbor which was bombed out. Now he was back at his old post. He was a perfect floor waiter. Once I mentioned briefly that I liked the breakfast rolls. On the following Sunday, when there were no fresh rolls, he brought me two which he had saved from the previous day and warmed up in the oven to make them crisp.

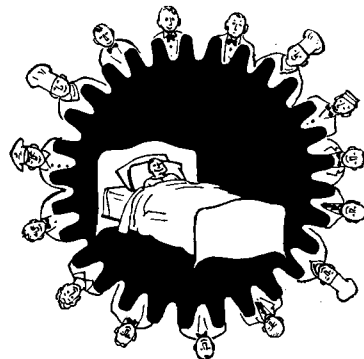
To please diet-conscious ladies and fat burghers, the hotel serves Gayelord Hauser dishes. When food became plentiful in 1948 after the lean years, too many people in Germany overate; now a reaction has set in. The hotel serves half portions in its restaurants, *Tellergerichte* (such as chicken ragout), and dietary dishes (scrambled eggs with crawfish, asparagus and salad). To please serious eaters, there is Oskar Behrmann, the head chef, a native Hamburger. Behrmann is an alumnus of many German restaurants, the Hotel Negresco in Nice, and several luxury liners. He is a perfectionist who is pained by the bad reputation of North German cuisine and has set out to improve it. For amateurs of local specialties he prepares *Seemannslabskaus* (a version of corned-beef hash), a summer dish called *Bohnen, Birnen, und Speck* (string beans, pears, and bacon), and *Hamburger Aalsuppe* (eel soup), Hamburg's answer to Marseille's *bouillabaisse*, made with fresh eel, fresh vegetables cooked in ham-bone soup, plums, thyme, and a great many other ingredients.

The keynote in Behrmann's kitchen empire is German precision rather than French-style inspiration. He

tolerates no compromise. Young string beans are never cooked in a copper pot, which would stain the beans. The *Stubenküken* ("room chicken") must be only eighteen days old, 350 grams heavy, and raised on milk. The *Kalbsstörfleisch* comes from the youngest calves brought up on milk and eggs. Behrmann fabricates his smoked salmon himself in a special oven, using beechwood because of its mild smoke. He buys the finest *Kateschinken* (hams smoked for two months in small huts, or *Katen*, by the peasants of the Lüneburger Heide), and Elbe sturgeon, which is so rare now that it costs \$4 a pound.

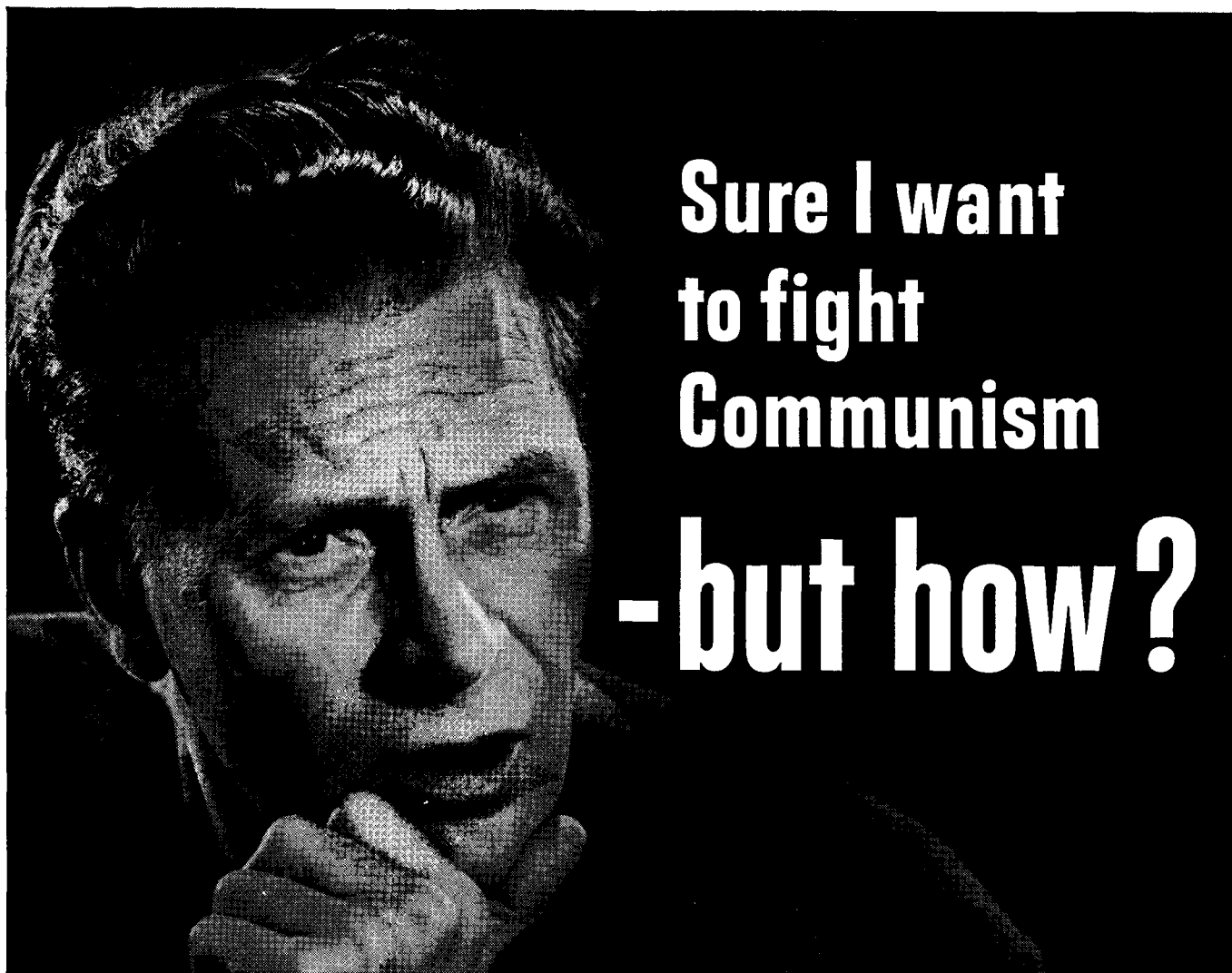
"When the hotel opened, they had a rule that sturgeon must not be served to the employees more than three times a week," Behrmann said, with a deep sigh. "Those were the days of house balls and pensionnaires. Now we have cocktail parties and transients. Some eighty people used to live at the hotel all year round. Now most guests stay a couple of days.

"The so-called Helgoland lobster comes from Norway, and the 'genuine Rhine salmon' is imported from Scandinavia. In the old days, a Hamburg *Knackwurst* made a *knack* in your mouth when you bit into it. Now it's just *wurst*. Yesterday I talked to a waiter who didn't even know the difference between the various kinds of grapes grown in Germany, Riesling, Silvaner, Gutedel, Ruländer, Gewürztraminer, Trollinger, Elbling. . . . What a shame! What will you have for lunch today? A North Sea *Steinbutt* (turbot)? Or a *Senatorentopf*? Three small steaks,



garnished with ham-spaghetti, tomato cream sauce, fresh asparagus, peas, young cucumber salad —"

You can order anything but a Hamburger. That's called *Deutsches Beefsteak* in Hamburg, and it isn't our Hamburger.



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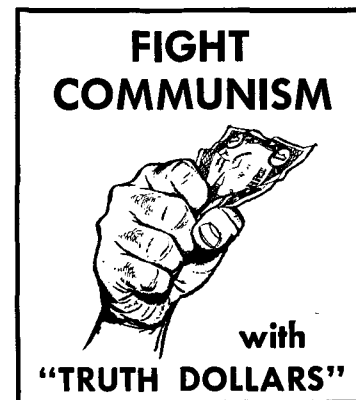
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